

Chapter

1

Make Windows XP Faster and More Efficient

Whether you use Windows XP at work or at home, you probably want to spend your computer time creating documents, sending and receiving e-mail, browsing the Web, playing games, and doing other useful and fun things. You probably do *not* want to spend your time wrestling with Windows XP or waiting for it to finish its tasks.

Using a few simple techniques, you can make working with Windows XP faster and more convenient. For example, rather than opening a number of Start menu folders to get to a program, you can create a shortcut in a more convenient location. If you have just set up Windows XP on a new machine, you can save yourself lots of time by transferring your old settings to the new computer.

There are also a few settings with which you can work that ensure Windows XP is working quickly and efficiently. For example, you can speed up your display by reducing the number of visual effects Windows XP uses to draw screen elements.

Sometimes getting the most out of Windows XP is a simple matter of taking care of the little things. For example, do you find yourself wasting precious time every time you accidentally press the Caps Lock key and have to delete and retype the errant text? If so, you can avoid the problem altogether by setting up Windows XP to warn you when you turn on Caps Lock.

This chapter introduces you to these and many other techniques for maximizing your Windows XP productivity.

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CREATE SHORTCUTS

for your favorite programs

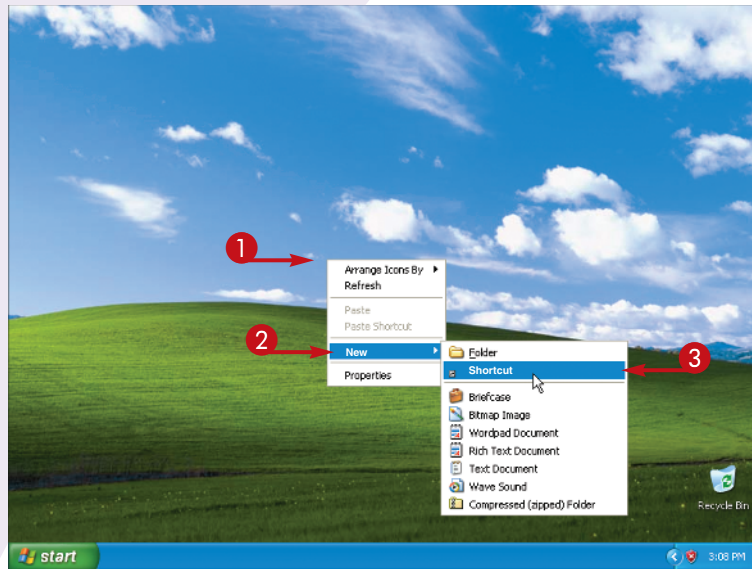
If you have a program that you use regularly, you can access the program more quickly by creating a shortcut. A *shortcut* is a special file that points to a program. When you double-click the shortcut, Windows XP automatically loads that program.

Shortcuts become particularly handy when you create them in a convenient location. For example, you can create a program shortcut on your Windows XP desktop. That way, instead of clicking the Start

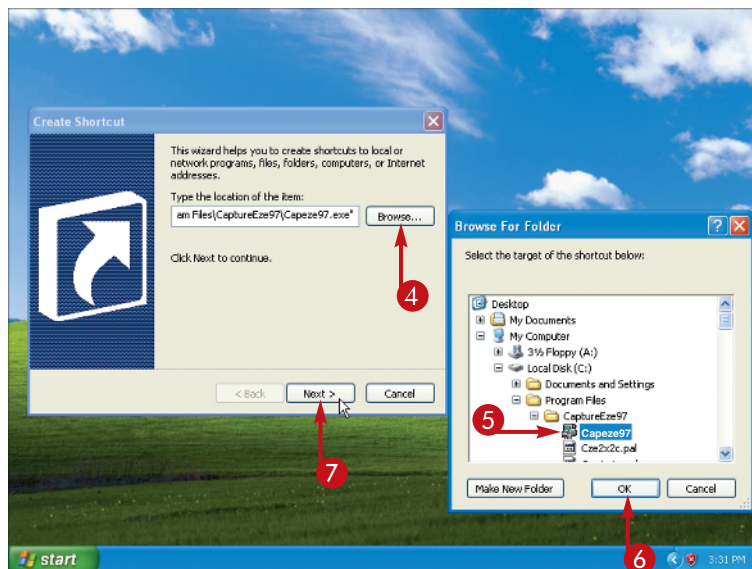
menu and opening a number of subfolders to find and launch a particular program, you can simply double-click the shortcut on the desktop.

You can create as many shortcuts as you want; the Windows XP desktop offers a number of features that help you keep your shortcuts organized. And if you find that you no longer use a shortcut, you can safely delete it without affecting the associated program.

This task shows you how to create and work with desktop shortcuts.



- 1 Right-click the location on your desktop where you want to create the shortcut.
- 2 Click New.
- 3 Click Shortcut.



The Create Shortcut Wizard appears.

- 4 Click Browse.

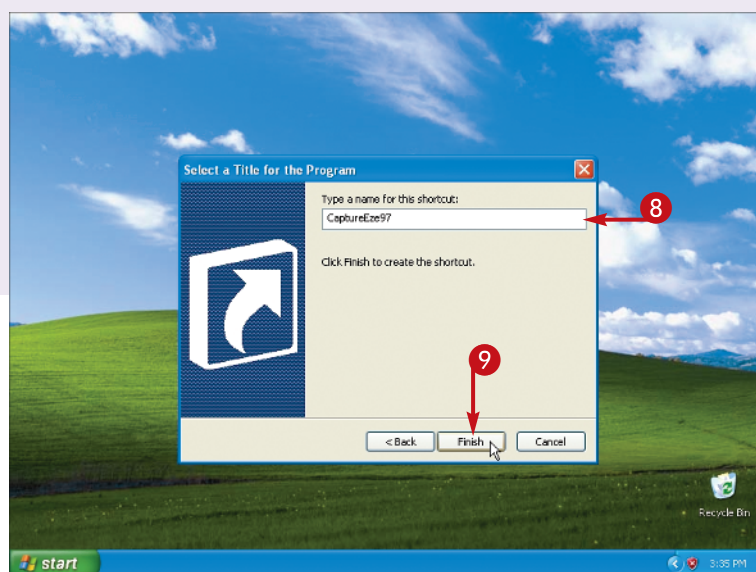
The Browse For Folder dialog box appears.

- 5 Select the program that you want the shortcut to start.

Note: You can also create shortcuts to documents.

- 6 Click OK.
- 7 Click Next.

- 8 Type a name for the shortcut.
- 9 Click Finish.



- An icon for the shortcut appears.

Note: You can also customize your shortcut icons, as explained in Task #19.

TIPS

Taskbar Trick!

The problem with adding shortcuts to your desktop is that other windows often obscure the desktop, particularly if you prefer running your program windows maximized. However, Windows gives you a quick method to get to the desktop. Right-click an empty section of the taskbar and then click Show the Desktop.

Desktop Trick!

If you frequently use the Windows XP desktop to store your program shortcuts, the desktop can quickly become a jumble of icons that make it difficult to find the shortcut you want. To solve this problem, right-click an empty spot on the desktop, click Arrange Icons By, and then Name. This sorts the shortcuts alphabetically by name.

TRANSFER YOUR SETTINGS

from an old computer

When you purchase a new computer to replace another machine, setting up the new system to use the same settings as the old one can often take a full day or more. You can save all that time for more productive pursuits by getting Windows XP to transfer those settings from your old computer and apply them automatically to your new computer. (See the following pages of this task for some examples of settings.)

You can do this by running the Files and Settings Transfer Wizard. You run this wizard in two stages. In the first stage, you run the wizard on your old computer to gather the settings. In the second stage, you run the wizard on your new computer to apply the settings.

Note, too, that the wizard can also gather files from the older computer, including the contents of your My Documents folder, your desktop, and more.

This task shows you how to use the Files and Settings Transfer Wizard.



GATHER THE SETTINGS FROM YOUR OLD COMPUTER

- 1 If your old computer is not running Windows XP, insert the Windows XP CD on your old computer.

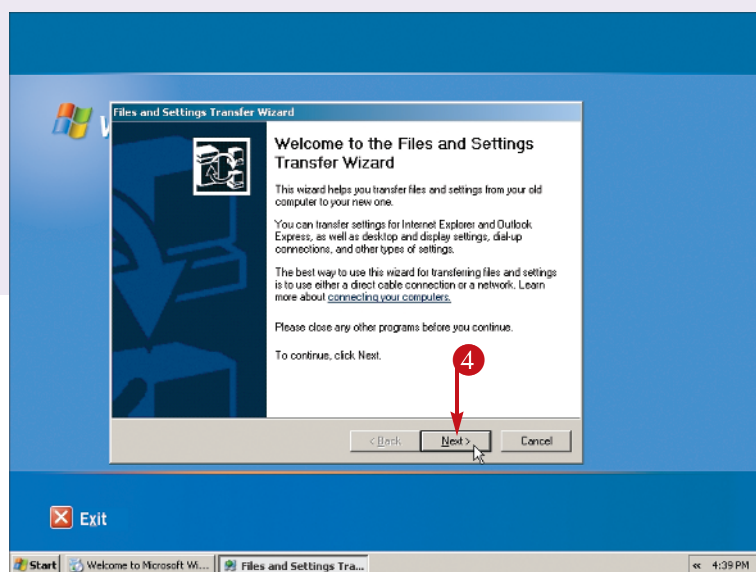
Note: If your old machine runs Windows XP, click start, All Programs, Accessories, System Tools, and then Files and Settings Transfer Wizard.

The Welcome to Microsoft Windows XP screen appears.

- 2 Click Perform additional tasks.
- 3 Click Transfer files and settings.

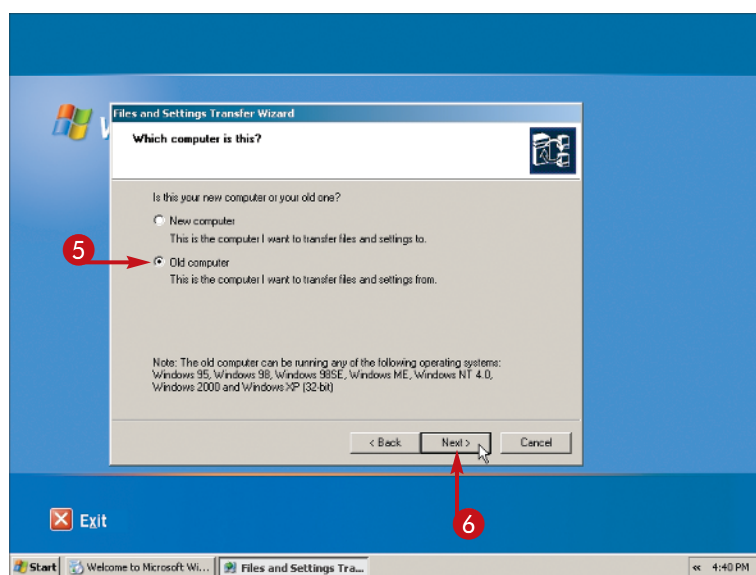
The Files and Settings Transfer Wizard dialog box appears.

- 4 Click Next.



The Which computer is this? dialog box appears.

- 5 Click Old computer (○ changes to ●).
 6 Click Next.



TIPS

Attention!

If you do not have a Windows XP CD, follow Steps 1 to 5 under the heading “Apply the Settings to Your New Computer,” later in this task. Click “I want to create a Wizard Disk in the following drive” (○ changes to ●). Insert an empty floppy disk and click Next to create the Wizard disk. Go to your old computer, insert the disk, click start, and then click Run. Type **a:\fastwiz.exe** and click OK to start the Files and Settings Transfer Wizard.

Attention!

If your old computer is running Windows XP, you can load the wizard by clicking start, All Programs, Accessories, System Tools, and then Files and Settings Transfer Wizard.

TRANSFER YOUR SETTINGS

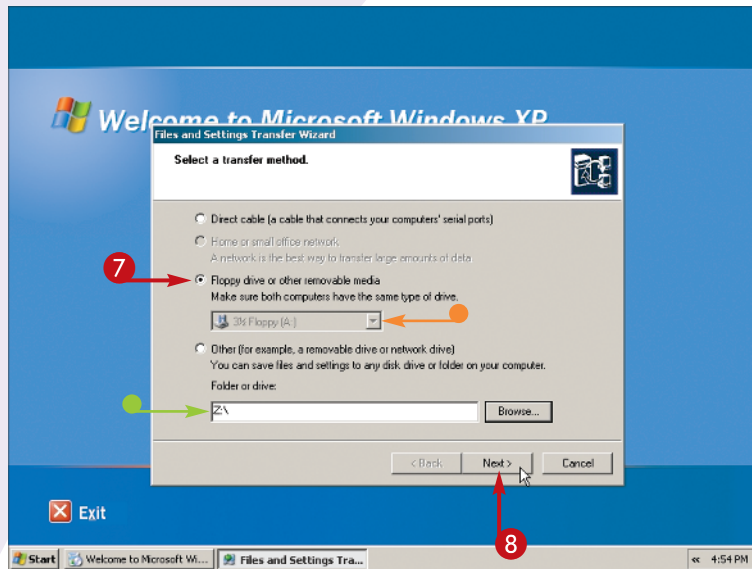
from an old computer

What settings does the Files and Settings Transfer Wizard transfer? For Windows XP customization, the wizard transfers your old display settings, such as the screen colors and fonts, desktop background, screen saver, and so on; your taskbar settings; your mouse and keyboard settings; your regional settings, such as number and currency formats, country location, and installed languages; and your sound and multimedia settings.

For program settings, the wizard includes the options and data for Internet Explorer, Outlook Express, MSN Explorer, Windows Media Player, Microsoft Messenger, and Microsoft NetMeeting. The wizard also gathers

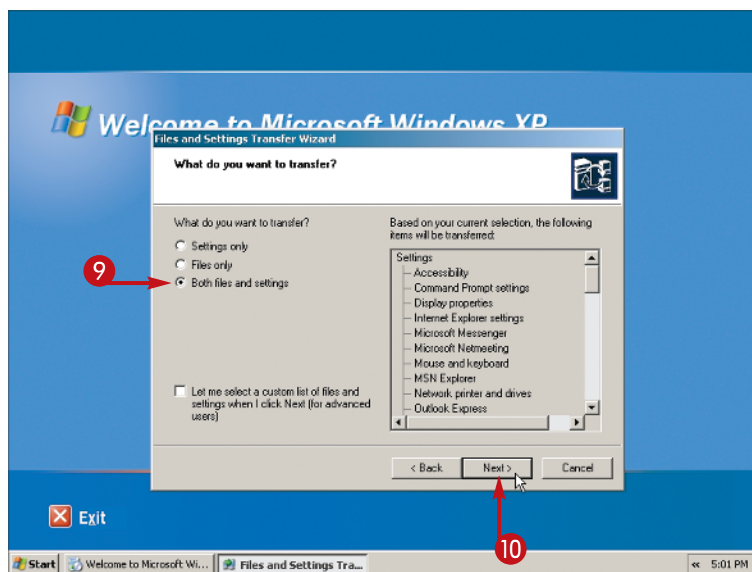
settings from certain third-party programs, including the Microsoft Office programs, Microsoft Works, Netscape, Photoshop, Quicken, RealPlayer, and others depending on what is installed on your computer.

For the files, the wizard gathers the contents of several folders, including My Documents, My Pictures, Desktop, Fonts, Shared Desktop, Shared Documents, and Quick Launch. It also gathers a long list of specific document file types, including WordPad documents, text files, all media files, as well as any file types associated with your installed third-party programs, including all Microsoft Office file types.



The Select a transfer method dialog box appears.

- 7 Click the transfer method that corresponds to how the two computers are connected (○ changes to ●).
- 8 If you clicked Floppy drive or other removable media, click here and choose the media you want to use.
- 9 If you clicked Other, type the name of the drive or folder in which you want to store files and settings.
- 10 Click Next.



The What do you want to transfer? dialog box appears.

- 9 Click Both files and settings (○ changes to ●).
- 10 Click Next.

The wizard gathers your files and settings and saves them to the location or media you selected.

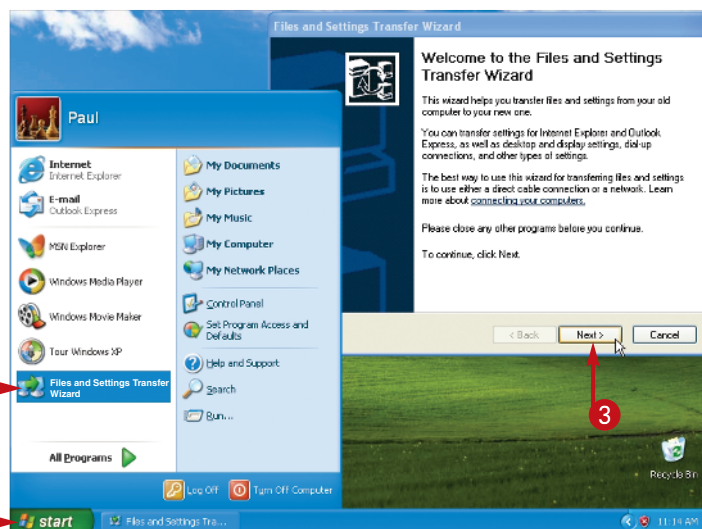
#2 CONTINUED



11 Click Finish.

12 Click Exit.

The Welcome to Microsoft Windows XP screen closes.



APPLY THE SETTINGS TO YOUR NEW COMPUTER

1 On the new computer, click start.

2 Click Files and Settings Transfer Wizard.

The Files and Settings Transfer Wizard appears.

Note: If you do not see the Files and Settings Transfer Wizard on the Start menu, click Start, All Programs, Accessories, System Tools, and then Files and Settings Transfer Wizard.

3 Click Next.

TIPS

Customize It!

You can create a custom list of files and settings to transfer. In the "What do you want to transfer?" dialog box, click "Let me select a custom list of files and settings" (☐ changes to ☒) and click Next. In the "Select custom files and settings" dialog box, click Add Setting, Add Folder, Add File, and Add File Type to add items to the list. To remove an item from the list, click it and then click Remove. Click Next when you have completed your custom list.

Caution!

To ensure that your files and settings are transferred properly, save any documents on which you are working and then shut down all your running programs.

TRANSFER YOUR SETTINGS

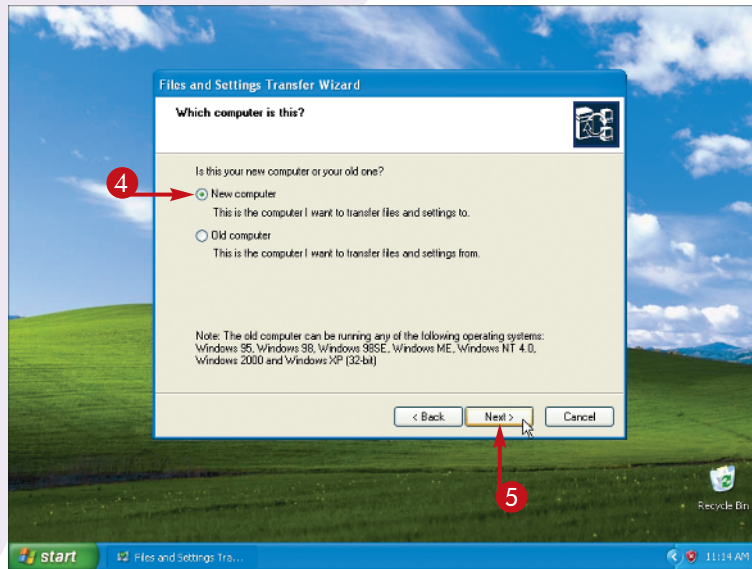
from an old computer

The Files and Settings Transfer Wizard places all the data into a single file and then compresses that file to save space. However, even basic system data will likely have at least a 10MB transfer file, and a system with lots of files and settings could easily have a transfer file that contains hundreds or thousands of megabytes.

With transfer files that big, the first transfer method you can rule out is floppy disks, which only hold about 1.44MB each. You are much better off using a DVD or CD burner, a Zip or Jaz disk, a flash drive, or some other large-capacity removable storage medium.

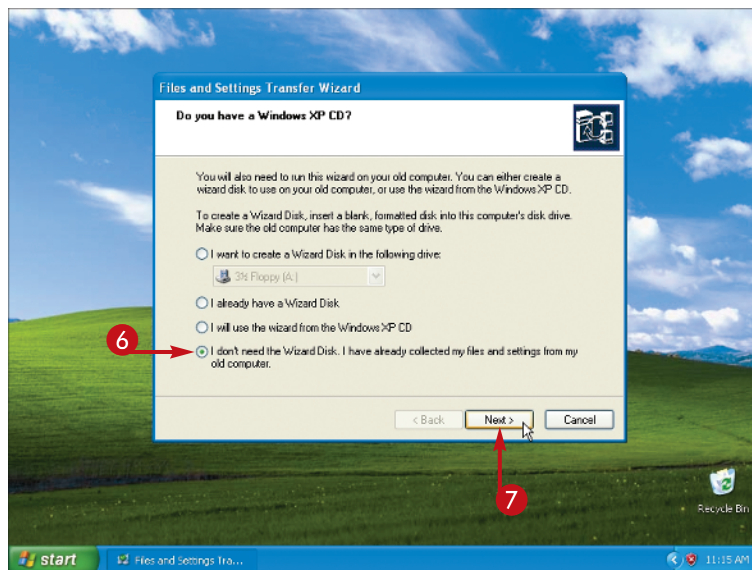
The next best transfer method is a direct cable connection between the two computers using a serial or parallel cable. You can use the New Connection Wizard to set this up. (Click start, All Programs, Accessories, Communications, and then New Connection Wizard.)

Finally, the best transfer method is via a network. You can save the settings to a folder, map that folder as a drive on your new computer (see Task #10), and then specify the mapped drive when you are applying the settings.



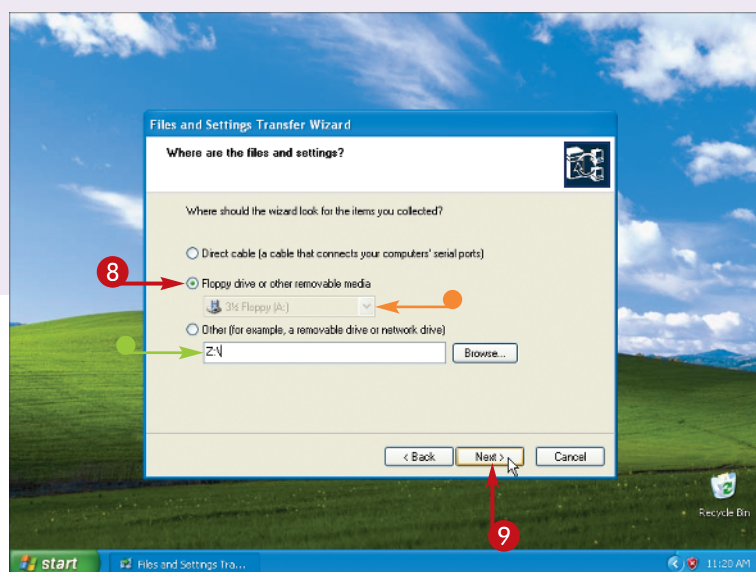
The Which computer is this dialog box appears.

- 4 Click New computer (○ changes to ●).
- 5 Click Next.



The Do you have a Windows XP CD dialog box appears.

- 6 Click I don't need the Wizard Disk (○ changes to ●).
- 7 Click Next.



The Where are the files and settings dialog box appears.

- 8 Click the transfer method that corresponds to how the two computers are connected (○ changes to ●).

- If you clicked Floppy drive or other removable media, click here and choose the media you want to use.

- If you clicked Other, type the name of the drive or folder in which you want to store the files and settings.

- 9 Click Next.

The wizard applies the settings and copies the files.

The Completing the Files and Settings Transfer Wizard dialog box appears.

- This area informs you of the results of the transfer, including whether the wizard failed to transfer any of the settings.

- 10 Click Finish.

The Completing the Files and Settings Transfer Wizard dialog box closes.

TIPS

Important!

If your old computer had one or more third-party programs installed, examine the list of files and settings to see if any of them refer specifically to those programs. If so, you must install those programs on your new computer before you apply the files and settings. This ensures that the third-party programs work the way they did on your old computer.

Did You Know?

If you want to know how much data the wizard will transfer, click the "Floppy drive or other removable media" option in the "Select a transfer method" dialog box (○ changes to ●), and then click your floppy drive in the list. After you select what to transfer, the wizard determines the total amount of data and displays the total in the dialog box that prompts you to insert the first floppy disk.

ADJUST VISUAL EFFECTS

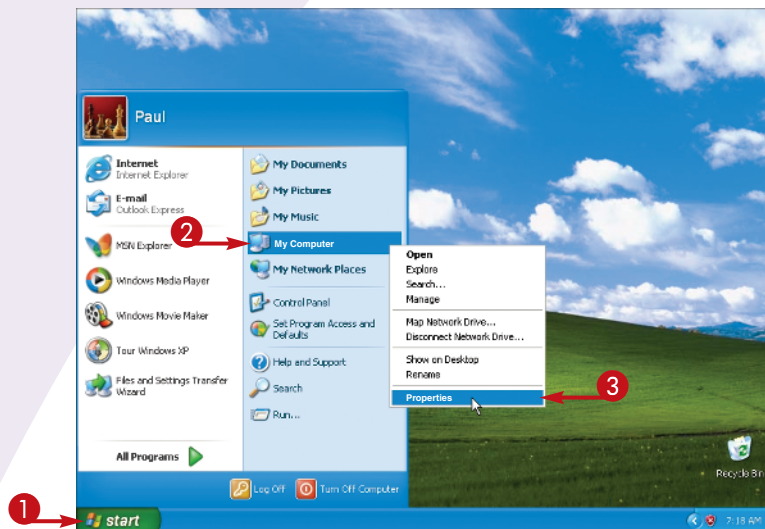
for best performance

You can turn off some or all of the visual effects that Windows XP uses to display screen elements. This reduces the load on your computer, which improves the overall performance of your machine.

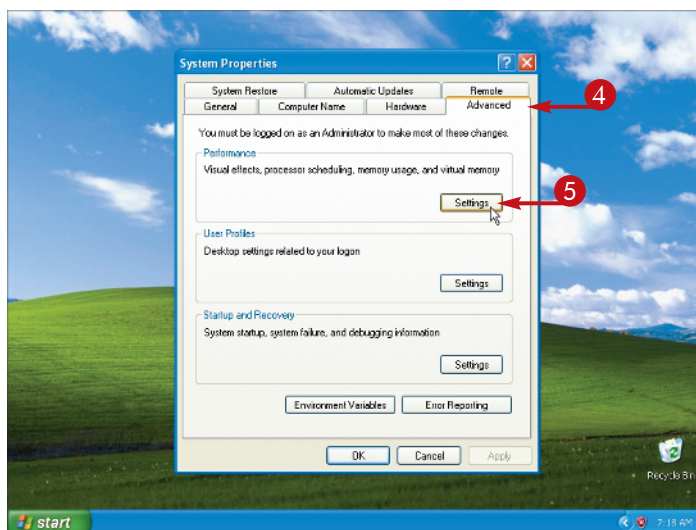
These visual effects include the animation Windows XP uses when you minimize or maximize a window. For example, when you minimize a window, it appears to shrink down to the taskbar. Such effects are designed to help a novice user better understand what is happening on their computer.

For graphics in general, and the visual effects in particular, performance is mostly determined by the amount of memory on the *graphics adapter*. This is a circuit board inside your computer that processes the graphical data generated by Windows XP and displayed on your monitor. The more memory on the adapter, the faster it can process the visual effects.

Most newer computers have a decent amount of adapter memory — at least 32MB — so turning off visual effects will have little impact on performance. If your adapter has 8MB or less, turning off visual effects can improve performance.

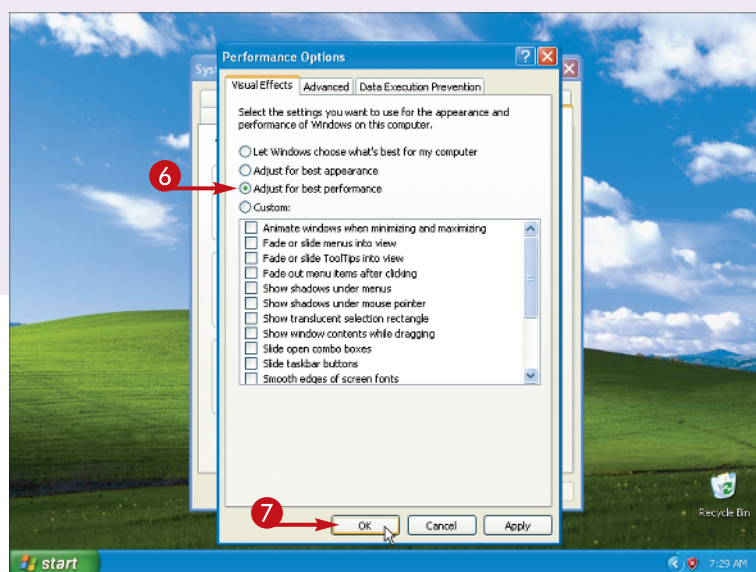


- 1 Click start.
- 2 Right-click My Computer.
- 3 Click Properties.



The System Properties dialog box appears.

- 4 Click the Advanced tab.
- 5 In the Performance area, click Settings.

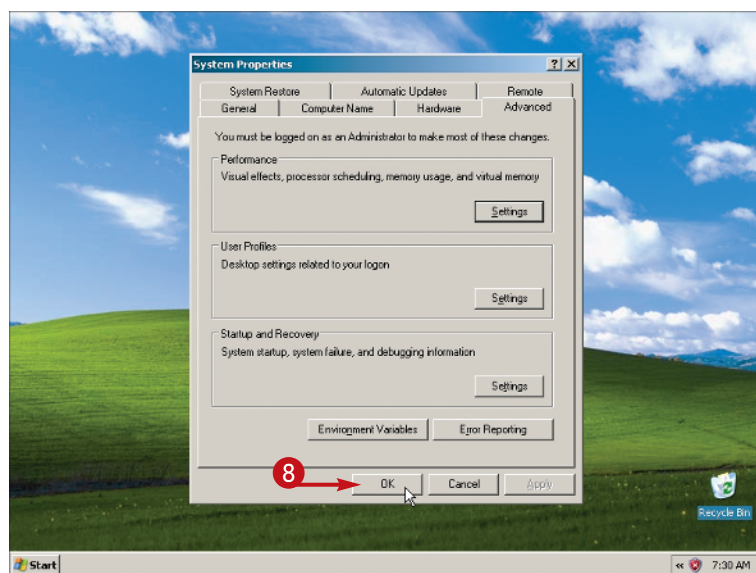


The Performance Options dialog box appears.

- 6 Click Adjust for best performance (○ changes to ●).

- 7 Click OK to return to the System Properties dialog box.

Windows XP turns off the visual effects.



- 8 Click OK.

The System Properties dialog box closes.

TIPS

Customize It!

If you prefer to turn off only certain visual effects, click "Adjust for best appearance" in Step 6 (○ changes to ●) to ensure all the effects are activated. Click Custom (○ changes to ●) and then click the check box for each visual effect you want to turn off (☑ changes to ☐).

Did You Know?

If you do not know how much memory your graphics adapter has, Windows XP can tell you. Right-click the desktop and then click Properties to view the Display Properties dialog box. Click the Settings tab and then click Advanced to display the Properties dialog box for your monitor and graphics adapter. Click the Adapter tab and then read the Memory Size value in the Adapter Information area.

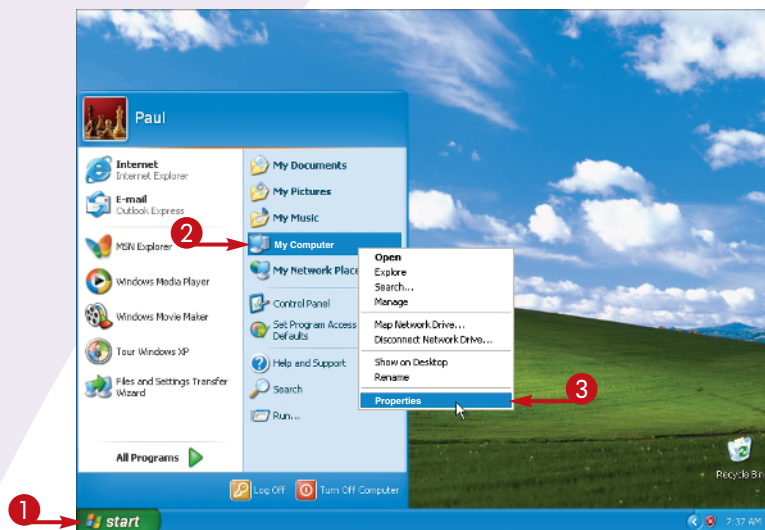
Ensure Windows XP is OPTIMIZED FOR PROGRAMS

You can set some options that ensure Windows XP maximizes the performance of your programs. These options control two Windows XP tasks: processor scheduling and memory usage.

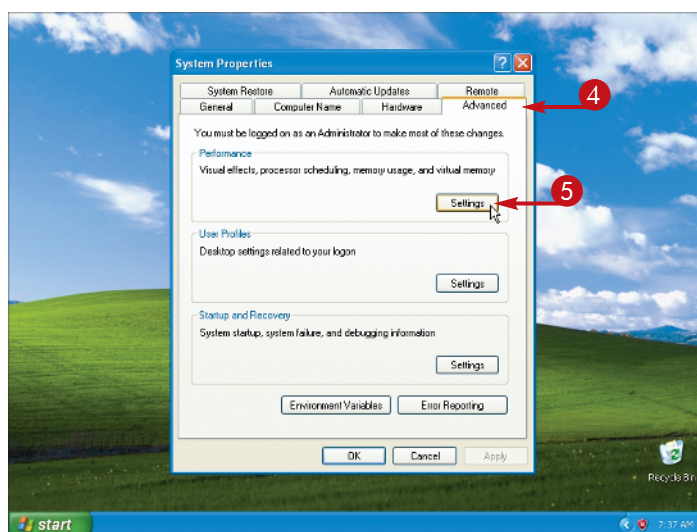
The *processor* (or *CPU*) is the chip inside your machine that coordinates all the computer's activity; some call it the "brain" of the computer. *Processor scheduling* determines how much time the processor allocates to the computer's activities. In particular, processor scheduling differentiates between the *foreground program* — the program in which you are currently working — and *background programs* — programs that perform tasks, such as printing or backing up, while you work in another program.

Memory (or *RAM*) is a set of chips inside your computer that constitute the work area of the machine. Programs and files are loaded from the hard drive into memory. Windows XP sets aside a portion of memory as the *system cache*, which holds recently used data for faster access. In terms of *memory usage*, the bigger the system cache, the less memory is available for your programs, which can reduce performance.

This task shows you how to set the processor scheduling and memory usage to optimize program performance.

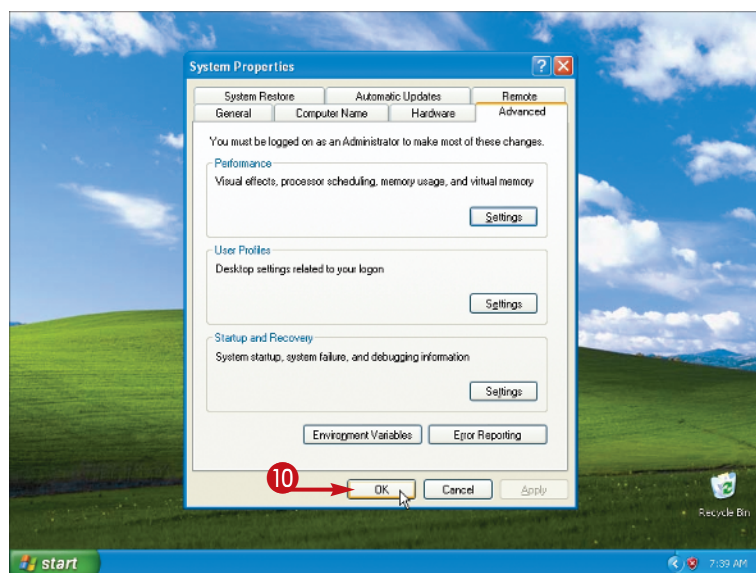
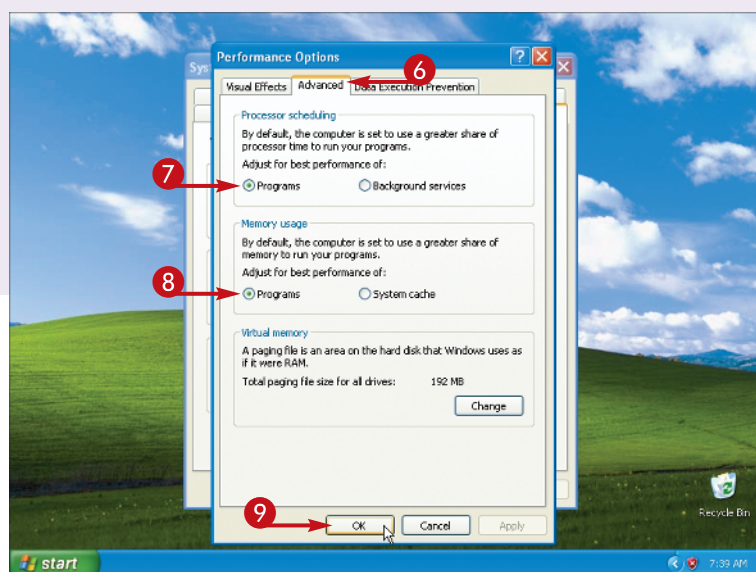


- 1 Click start.
- 2 Right-click My Computer.
- 3 Click Properties.



The System Properties dialog box appears.

- 4 Click the Advanced tab.
- 5 In the Performance area, click Settings.



The Performance Options dialog box appears.

- 6 Click the Advanced tab.
- 7 In the Processor scheduling area, click Programs (○ changes to ●).
- 8 In the Memory usage area, click Programs (○ changes to ●).
- 9 Click OK to return to the System Properties dialog box.

Windows XP applies the performance settings.

- 10 Click OK.

The System Properties dialog box closes.

Note: You can also increase the performance of individual programs, as explained in Task #5.

TIPS

Did You Know?

There are circumstances where you may be better off clicking the System cache option (○ changes to ●) in the Advanced tab of the Performance Options dialog box. Specifically, any programs that are extremely data-intensive can benefit from a larger system cache. Such programs include high-end graphics software, video-editing software, and databases that deal with large files.

Did You Know?

If you do not know what kind of processor or how much memory your computer has, Windows XP can tell you. Click start, right-click My Computer, and then click Properties to view the System Properties dialog box. Click the General tab and then read the information in the Computer area.

ADJUST A PROGRAM'S PRIORITY

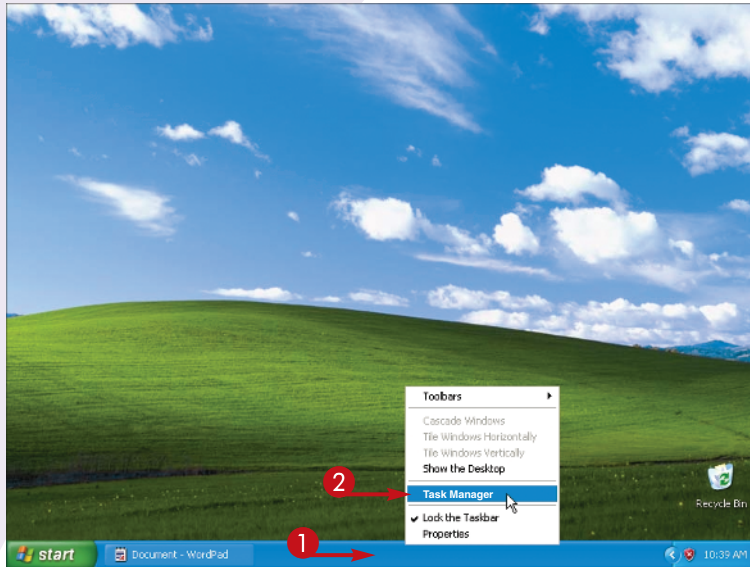
for better performance

You can improve the performance of a program by adjusting the priority given to the program by your computer's processor.

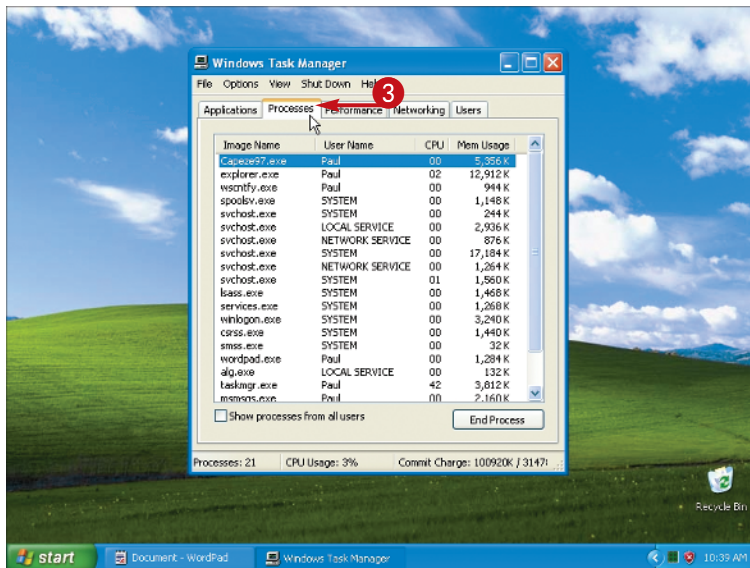
The processor enables programs to run by doling out thin slivers of its computing time to each program. These time slivers are called *cycles* because they are given to programs cyclically. For example, if you have three programs running — A, B, and C — the processor gives a cycle to A, one to B, another to C, and then back to A again. This cycling happens quickly, appearing seamless when you work with each program.

The *base priority* is a ranking that determines the relative frequency with which a program gets processor cycles. A program given a higher priority gets more cycles, which improves the program's performance. For example, suppose you raise the priority of program A. The processor may give a cycle to A, one to B, another to A, one to C, another to A, and so on.

This task shows you how to adjust the base priority for a given program.



- 1 Right-click an empty section of the taskbar.
- 2 Click Task Manager.



The Task Manager window appears.

- 3 Click the Processes tab.

This list shows all the processes currently running on your computer.

Note: A process is anything that requires processor time. This includes not only your running programs, but also the services and programs that Windows XP itself uses to perform housekeeping and other chores.

#5

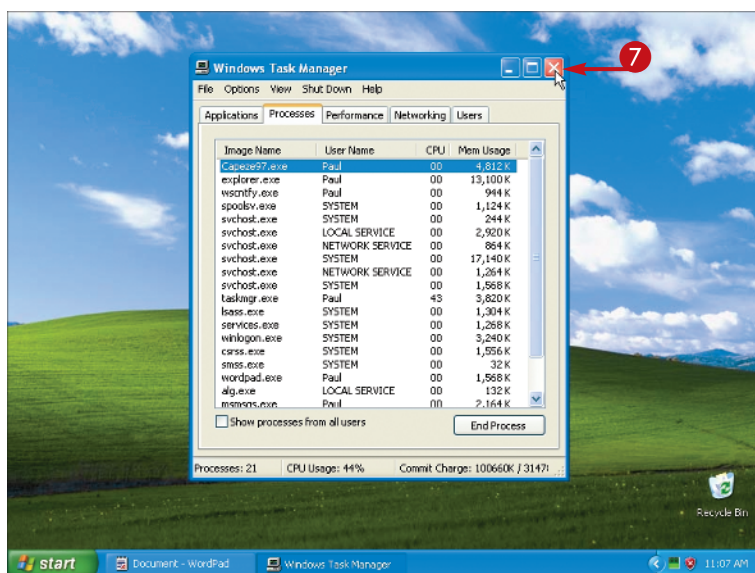
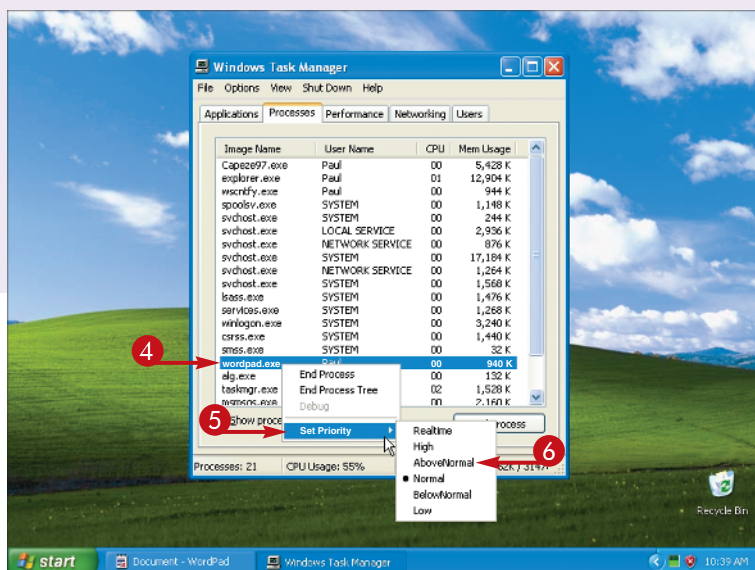
DIFFICULTY LEVEL

- 4 Right-click the program with which you want to work.
- 5 Click Set Priority.
- 6 Click the priority level you want to apply to the program.

Windows XP adjusts the program's priority.

In this example, WordPad's priority is increased to AboveNormal so that Windows can give the program more processing cycles.

- 7 Click here to close the Task Manager window.



TIPS

Customize It!

After you change the priority of one or more programs, you may forget the values that you have assigned to each one. To help, you can view the priority for all the items in the Processes tab. Click View and then click Select Columns to display the Select Columns dialog box. Click Base Priority (☐ changes to ☒) and click OK. This adds a Base Priority column to the Processes list.

Did You Know?

If you are not sure which process is associated with the program you want to work with, click the Task Manager's Applications tab. This tab displays a list of your running programs. Right-click the program with which you want to work and then click Go To Process. Windows XP switches to the Processes tab and selects the program's process in the list.

TURN OFF CONFIRMATION for deleted files

#6



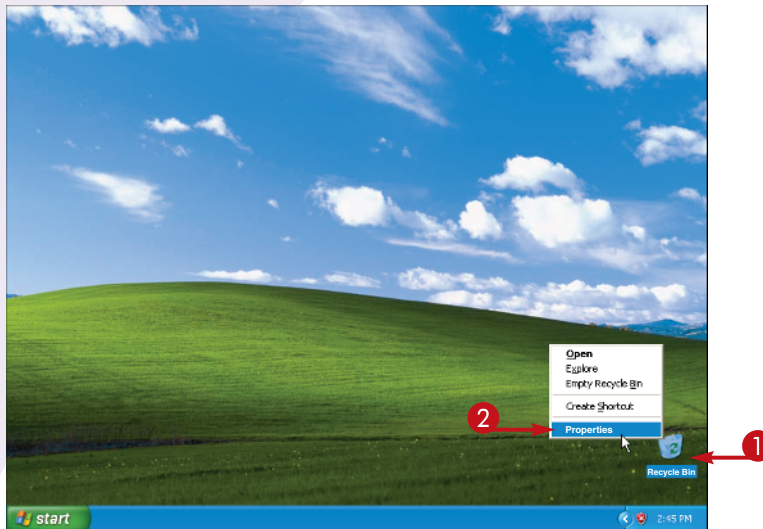
TIP

You can save a step each time you delete a file by turning off the Recycle Bin's confirmation dialog box.

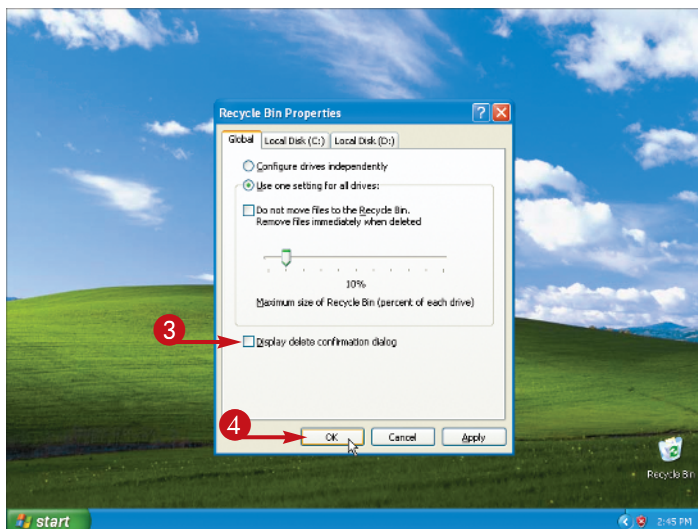
Each time you delete a file in Windows XP, the Confirm File Delete dialog box appears, asking if you are sure you want to send the file to the Recycle Bin. If you find this extra step unnecessary or inefficient, you can adjust the Recycle Bin's properties to turn off the confirmation prompt.

More Options!

If you do not want to use the Recycle Bin at all, Windows XP offers two methods for deleting a file immediately. If you prefer to delete a file immediately only occasionally, click the file and then press the Shift+Delete keys. To delete all files immediately, follow Steps 1 and 2 to display the Recycle Bin Properties dialog box, click the "Do not move files to the Recycle Bin" option (☐ changes to ☒), and then click OK.



- 1 Right-click the desktop's Recycle Bin icon.
- 2 Click Properties.



- The Recycle Bin Properties dialog box appears.
- 3 Click Display delete confirmation dialog (☒ changes to ☐).
 - 4 Click OK.

When you delete a file from now on, Windows XP will not ask you to confirm.

HEAR AN ALERT

when you press the Caps Lock key

#7



TIP

You can adjust a setting that tells Windows XP to beep your computer's speaker whenever you press the Caps Lock key. This can be a real timesaver when you press Caps Lock by accident. As you probably know, when you inadvertently press Caps Lock, it may be a while before you realize it, and you end up with a great deal of typing that has the capital letters reversed. Not only must you delete this text, but you must also retype it with the correct letters. Hearing an alert when you press Caps Lock means you can avoid this extra work.

Did You Know?

You can also activate the ToggleKeys setting by holding down the Num Lock key for five seconds. You hear a beep and the ToggleKeys dialog box appears. Click OK to keep ToggleKeys turned on; click Cancel to turn ToggleKeys off. If you want to disable the Num Lock shortcut, click Settings to display the Keyboard tab of the Accessibility Options dialog box, click Settings in the ToggleKeys area, click Use Shortcut (☒ changes to ☐), and then click OK.



- 1 Click start.
- 2 Click Control Panel.
The Control Panel window appears.
- 3 Click Accessibility Options.

- 4 In the Accessibility Options window, click Accessibility Options.
- 5 In the Accessibility Options dialog box, click the Keyboard tab.
- 6 Click Use ToggleKeys (☐ changes to ☒).
- 7 Click OK.
- 8 Click here to close the Accessibility Options window.

Windows will alert you with a tone when you press the Caps Lock key.

Force Windows XP to USE LESS DISK SPACE

You can adjust the settings of three different Windows XP components to force those components to use less hard drive space.

Although most of today's hard drives are quite large, it is still possible for hard drive space to become scarce. When this happens, many people try to resolve the problem by deleting a few files or uninstalling a program. Unfortunately, in most cases these remedies only save a few megabytes. With the techniques you learn in this task, you can easily save hundreds or even thousands of megabytes.

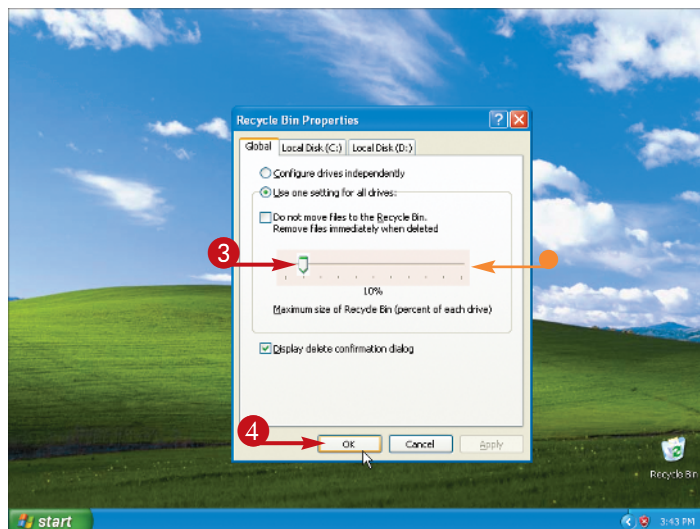
The three components you work with in this task are the Recycle Bin, System Restore, and Internet Explorer. You learn about the latter two components later in this task.

The Recycle Bin uses disk space to store deleted files temporarily. However, Windows XP sets aside 10 percent of the hard drive to store these files. On a 20GB hard drive, this represents 2GB. Reducing the Recycle Bin usage to 5 percent saves you 1GB.



REDUCE RECYCLE BIN DISK USAGE

- 1 Right-click the desktop's Recycle Bin icon.
- 2 Click Properties.



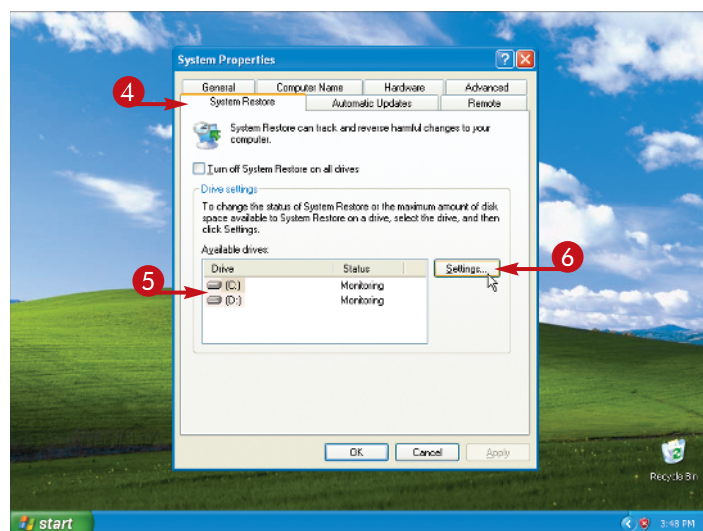
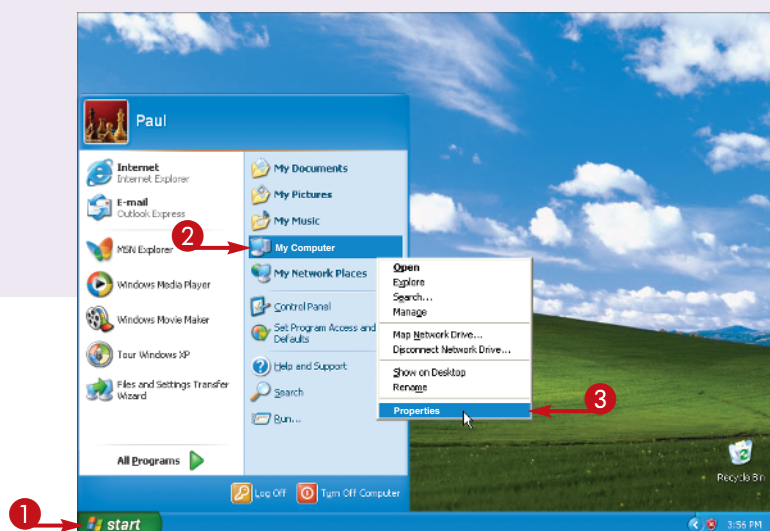
The Recycle Bin Properties dialog box appears.

- The slider determines the percentage of hard drive space allocated to the Recycle Bin files.
- 3 Click and drag the slider to the left to reduce the percentage.
 - 4 Click OK.

Windows now uses less space for the Recycle Bin.

**REDUCE SYSTEM RESTORE
DISK USAGE**

- 1 Click start.
- 2 Right-click My Computer.
- 3 Click Properties.



The System Properties dialog box appears.

- 4 Click the System Restore tab.
- 5 Click the drive with which you want to work.
- 6 Click Settings.

TIPS**More Options!**

You can also reclaim hard drive space using the Disk Cleanup program. Click start, All Programs, Accessories, System Tools, and then Disk Cleanup.

Caution!

You can save even more hard drive space by reducing to a minimum the percentage used by the Recycle Bin. However, this is dangerous because it also compromises the effectiveness of this tool. Minimizing the Recycle Bin's disk space usage means that deleted files will be stored only for a short time, so you may not be able to recover an accidentally deleted file.

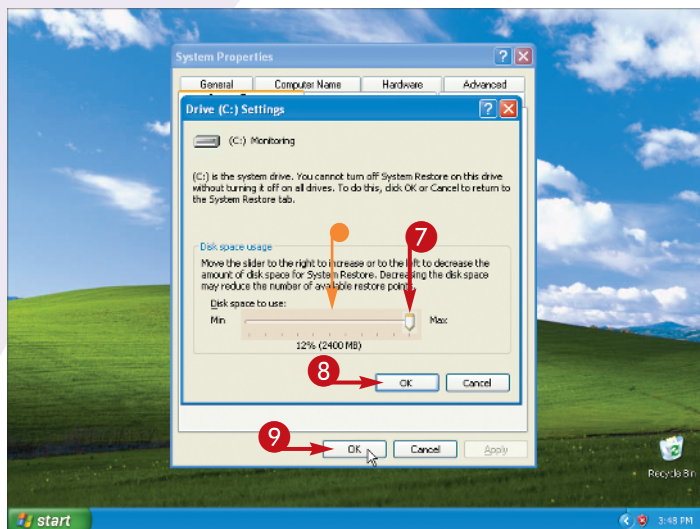
Force Windows XP to USE LESS DISK SPACE

The other two Windows XP components that you modify in this task are System Restore and Internet Explorer.

System Restore uses hard drive space to save its restore points, which are “snapshots” of your system state. You can use these restore points to restore your malfunctioning system to an earlier, working configuration. By default, the program takes up 12 percent of the hard drive for this purpose, which is usually enough to store several weeks’ worth of restore points. If you halve this percentage, you still

save enough restore points and you reclaim 1.2GB on a 20GB hard drive.

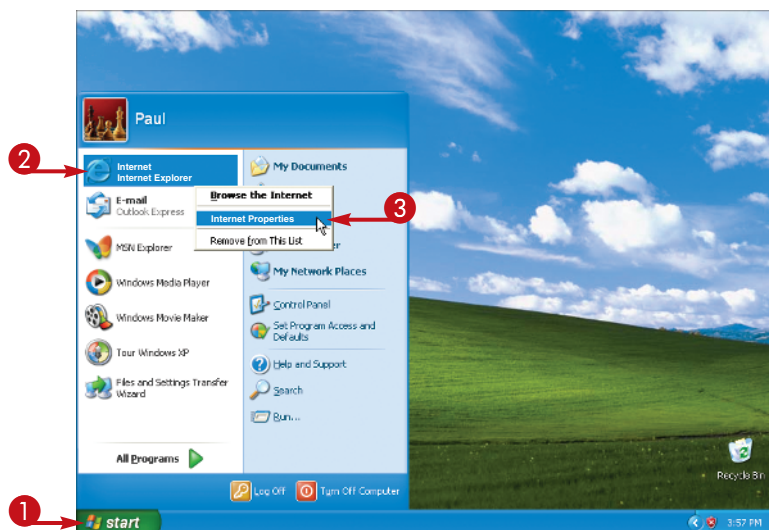
Internet Explorer uses hard drive space to store its temporary Internet files, which are local copies of Web site files that the program uses to make sites display faster the next time you access them. The amount of disk space used depends on the size of the hard drive and the amount of free space, but you can generally save a few hundred megabytes by reducing the disk space usage.



The drive's Settings dialog box appears.

- The slider determines the percentage of hard drive space used for the restore points created by System Restore.
- 7 Click and drag the slider to the left to reduce the percentage.
- 8 Click OK to return to the System Properties dialog box.
- 9 Click OK.

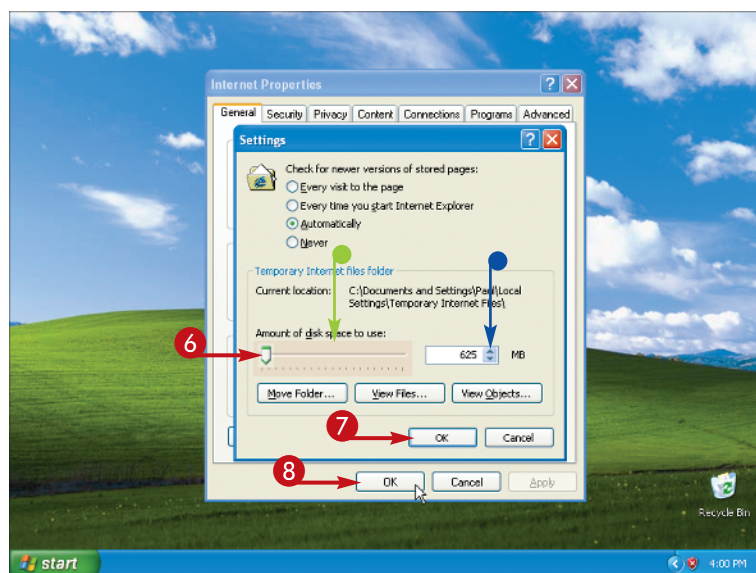
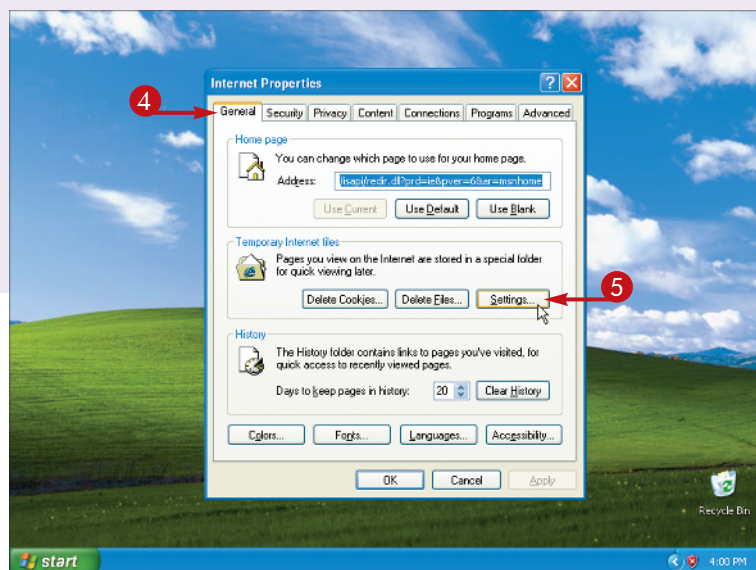
Windows now uses less System Restore disk space.



REDUCE INTERNET EXPLORER DISK USAGE

- 1 Click start.
- 2 Right-click Internet.
- 3 Click Internet Properties.

Note: If your Start menu's Internet icon launches a browser other than Internet Explorer, click start, Control Panel, Network, Internet Connections, and then Internet Options.



The Internet Properties dialog box appears.

4 Click the General tab.

5 Click Settings.

The Settings dialog box appears.

- The slider determines the percentage of hard disk space used for the temporary Internet files.

6 Click and drag the slider to the left to reduce the percentage.

- You can also click here to set the amount of disk space, in megabytes.

7 Click OK to return to the Internet Properties dialog box.

8 Click OK.

Windows now uses less space for Internet Explorer.

TIPS

Caution!

Avoid reducing to a minimum the percentage used by System Restore and Internet Explorer because this minimizes the usefulness of these programs. For example, minimizing System Restore's disk space usage sharply reduces the number of saved restore points. This may prevent you from restoring your computer to a previously working state. Similarly, minimizing the number of saved temporary Internet files can slow down your Web surfing.

More Options!

If your hard drive uses NTFS (New Technology File System), you can save even more disk space by compressing the drive. In My Computer, click the hard drive, click File, and then click Properties to open the drive's Properties dialog box. Click the "Compress drive to save disk space" option (☐ changes to ☒).

Disable FAST USER SWITCHING

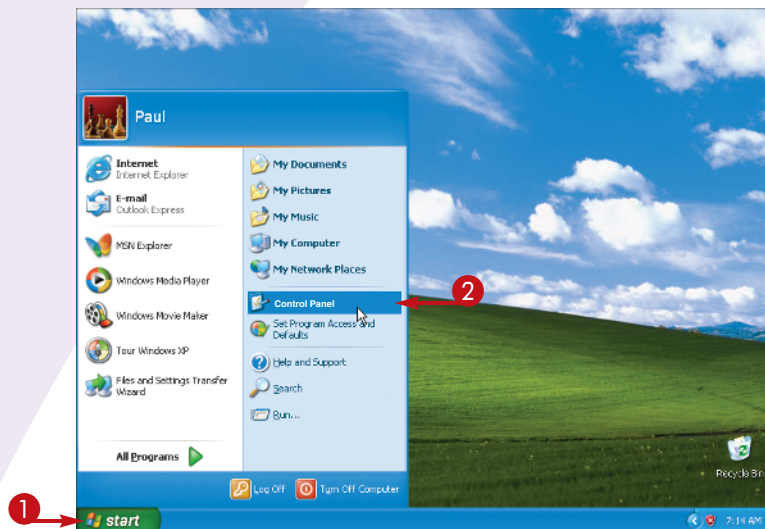
You can speed up the performance of your computer by turning off Windows XP's Fast User Switching feature.

Windows XP supports *user accounts* that enable different people to log on and use the system with their own settings for the desktop, display, Start menu, taskbar, Internet Explorer favorites, Outlook Express accounts, and their own documents.

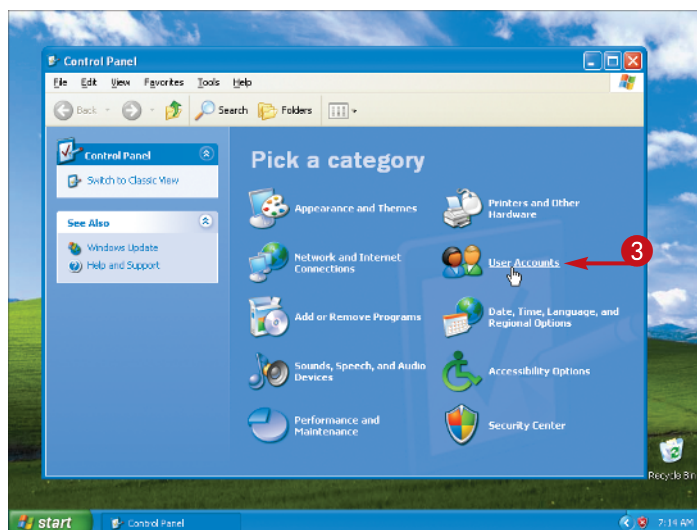
The *Fast User Switching* feature enables a second person to log on to his or her account while the first person's programs and documents remain open but

temporarily hidden from view. (To try this out, click start, Log Off, Switch User, and then the name of the user who wants to log on.)

This is a convenient feature, but it comes at a price: the original user's open programs and documents remain in memory, which reduces the overall memory available for the second user. And because Windows XP enables multiple users to be logged on at the same time, each set of open programs and documents reduces the memory available for all the users. In general, the less memory available, the slower your computer will run.

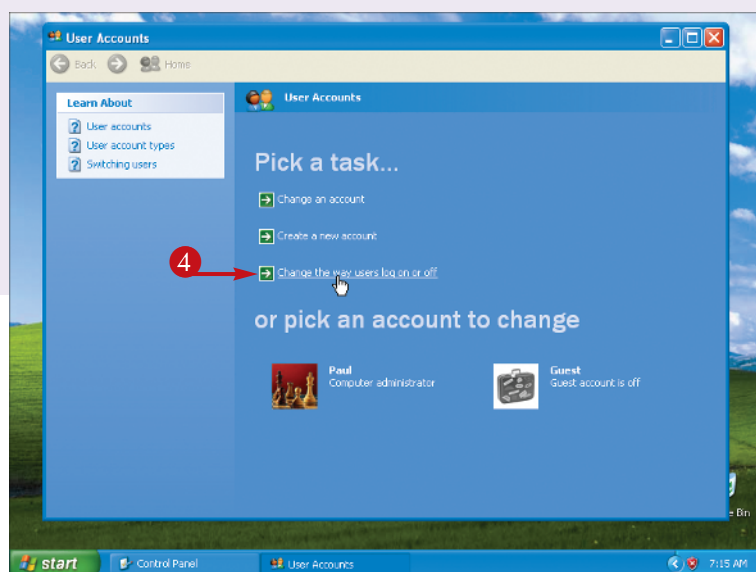


- 1 Click start.
- 2 Click Control Panel.



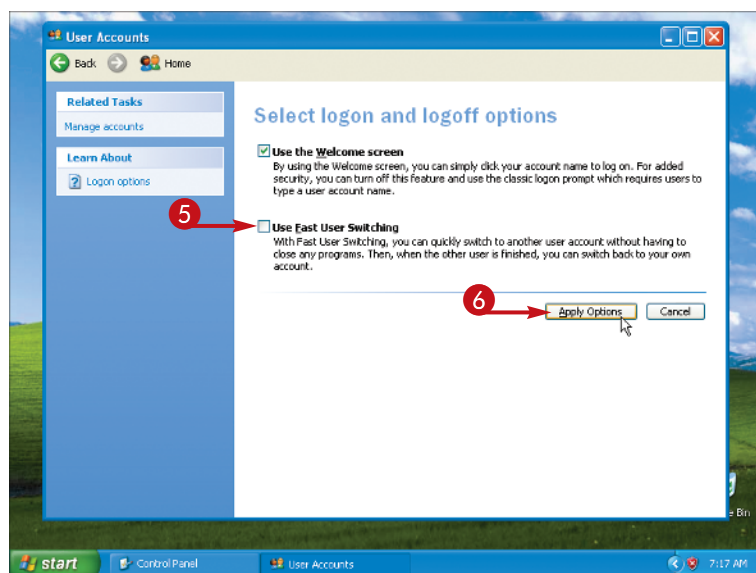
The Control Panel window appears.

- 3 Click User Accounts.



The User Accounts window appears.

- 4 Click Change the way users log on or off.



The Select logon and logoff options window appears.

- 5 Click Use Fast User Switching (☒ changes to ☐).
- 6 Click Apply Options.

Windows disables Fast User Switching.

Note: See Task #79 to learn how to protect your user account with a password.

TIPS

Did You Know?

The reduction in performance caused by Fast User Switching only occurs on computers that have a small amount of memory: say, 128MB of RAM or less. If you want the convenience of this feature, then you must add more memory to your system. Ideally, you should add at least another 64MB for each user. (See Task #4 to find out how much memory is installed on your computer.)

Try This!

Another advantage you gain by disabling Fast User Switching is the ability to quickly lock your computer so that no one else can use it or view what is on your screen if your username is password protected. Press the Windows Logo+L keys. Windows XP clears the screen and displays the Unlock Computer dialog box, which prompts for your account password.

DISPLAY A NETWORK FOLDER

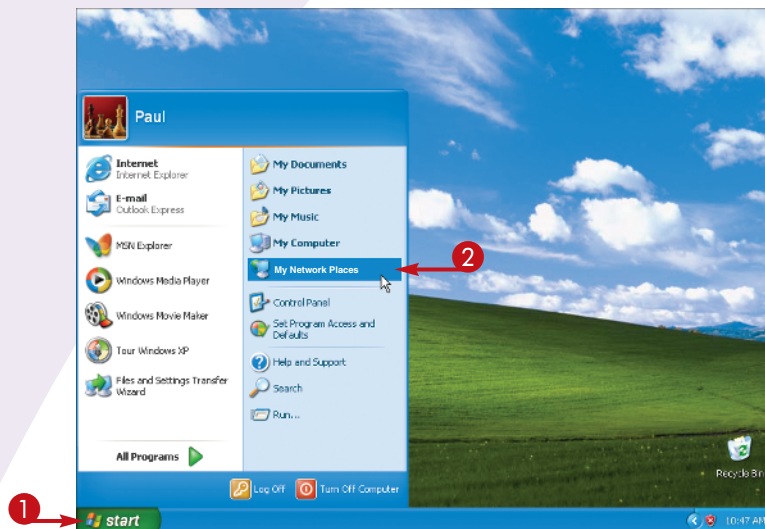
as a disk drive on your computer

You can gain easier access to a shared network folder by displaying the folder as though it was a disk drive on your computer.

If your computer is part of a network, you can use My Network Places to view the folders that other users have shared on the network. This is convenient most of the time, but there are two circumstances where it is not. First, if you want to work with a subfolder, you must open the shared folder and then drill down through the subfolders until you get the one you want. Second, if the folder does not appear

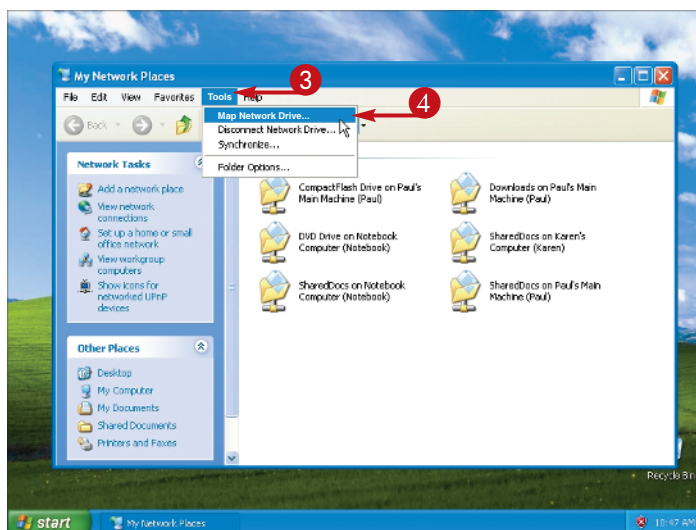
in My Network Places, you must open your workgroup, open the computer that contains the folder, and then open the folder.

Both of these scenarios are inefficient and time consuming, particularly if you access the contents of the folder regularly. To save time, Windows XP enables you to display any shared network folder as though it were a disk drive on your computer. This is called *mapping* the network folder. The advantage of mapping is that an icon for the mapped folder appears in My Computer, so you can simply double-click the icon to access the folder.



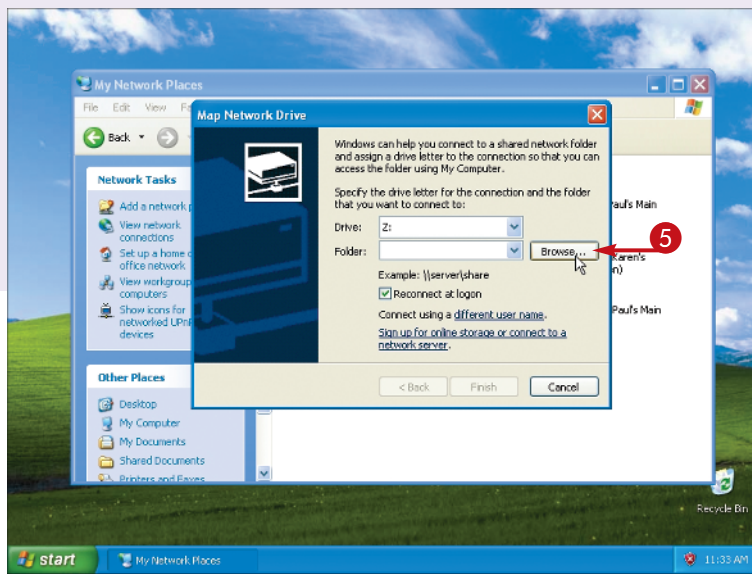
- 1 Click start.
- 2 Click My Network Places.

Note: If you do not see the My Network Places icon on the Start menu, click My Computer and then My Network Places.



The My Network Places window appears.

- 3 Click Tools.
- 4 Click Map Network Drive.

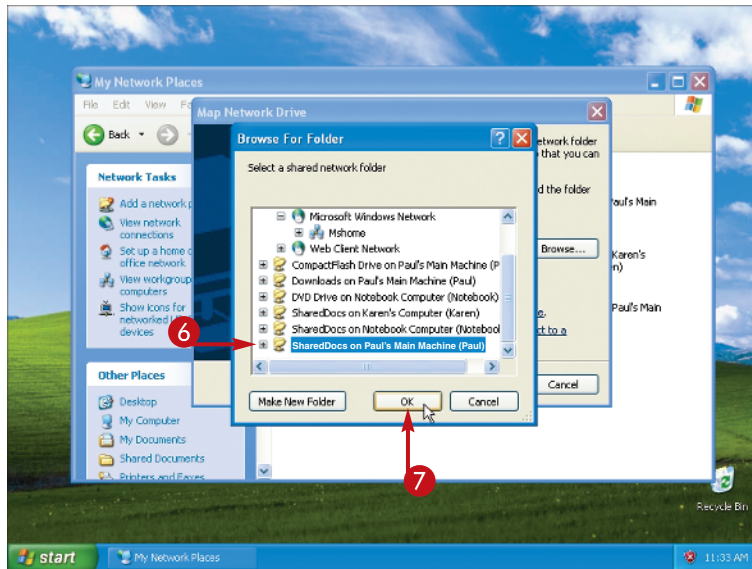


The Map Network Drive dialog box appears.

#10



5 Click Browse.



The Browse For Folder dialog box appears.

6 Click the shared network folder with which you want to work.

7 Click OK to return to the Map Network Drive dialog box.

TIPS

More Options!

Here is a faster way to open the Map Network Drive dialog box: Click start, right-click My Computer or My Network Places, and then click Map Network Drive.

Customize It!

If you think you will be mapping a different network folder frequently, you can add a Map Drive button to the My Computer toolbar. Click View, Toolbars, and then Customize to display the Customize Toolbar dialog box. In the Available toolbar buttons list, click Map Drive and then click Add. Click Close. The Map Drive button (📁) appears on your My Computer toolbar.

DISPLAY A NETWORK FOLDER

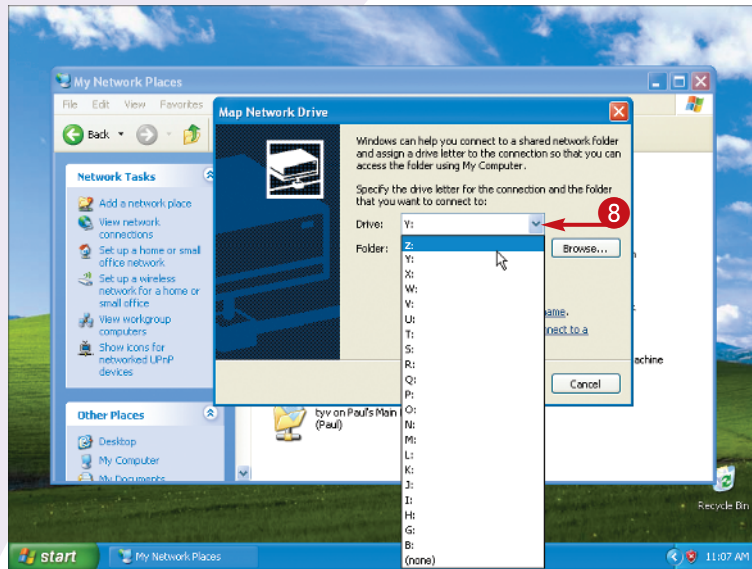
as a disk drive on your computer

Another advantage that comes with mapping network folders to local disk drive letters is that it can solve problems that occur with certain programs.

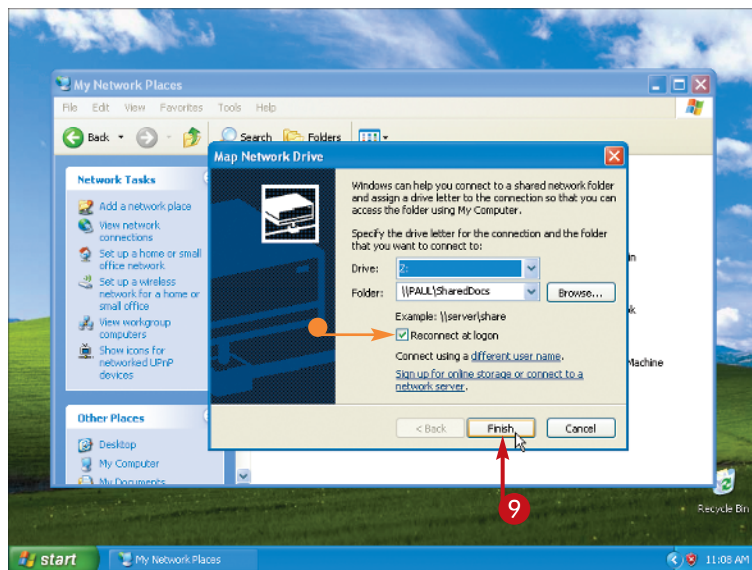
Some software programs — particularly older Windows programs and MS-DOS programs — are programmed to work only with local files, meaning that they cannot handle shared network folders directly. You can work around this problem by mapping a drive letter to the shared network folder. This makes it appear as though the network folder is part of your local computer, which is almost always enough to fool these older programs.

Given all these advantages of mapped network folders, you may decide to use them often.

Remember, however, that you are limited by the number of available drive letters on your computer. For example, suppose your computer has a floppy disk drive (drive A), two hard disk drives (drives C and D), a CD-ROM drive (drive E), and a DVD-ROM drive (drive F). This leaves 21 available drive letters: B and G through Z.



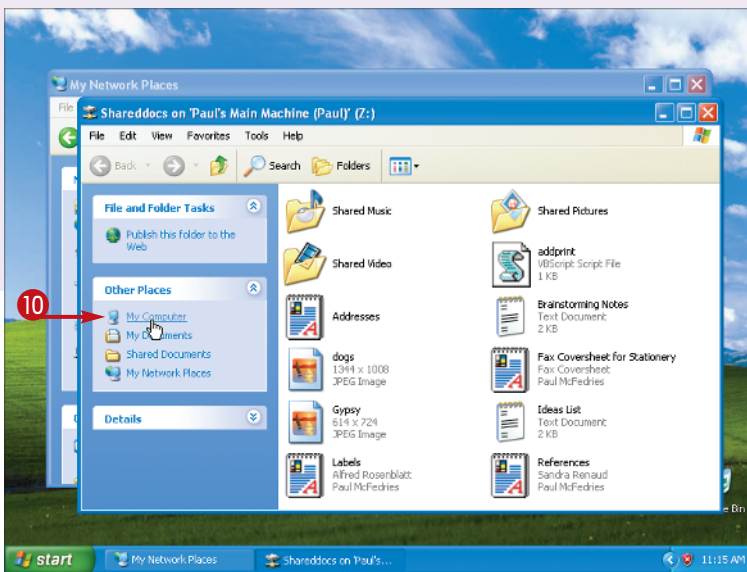
- 8 Click here and then click the drive letter you want to assign to the network folder.



- If you do not want Windows XP to assign the drive letter to the network folder each time you start your computer, you can click Reconnect at Logon (☒ changes to ☐).
- 9 Click Finish.

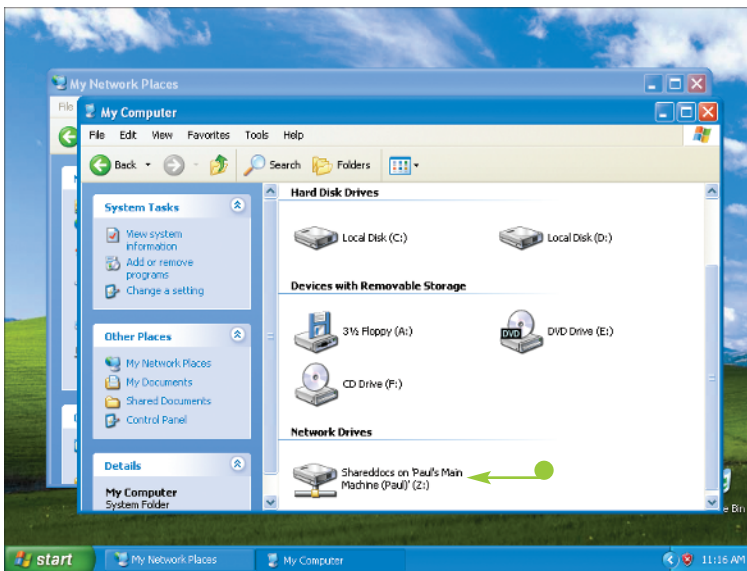
A window showing the contents of the network folder appears.

- 10 Click My Computer.



The My Computer window appears.

- An icon for the drive letter appears in My Computer's Network Drives section.



TIPS

Caution!

If you use a removable drive such as CompactFlash memory module, Windows XP automatically assigns a drive letter to such a drive. This often causes a conflict if you have a mapped network folder that uses a lower drive letter (such as D, E, or F). Therefore, using higher drive letters (such as X, Y, and Z) for your mapped network folders is good practice.

Remove It!

To speed up the Windows XP startup and reduce clutter in My Computer, you can disconnect mapped network folders that you no longer use. To disconnect a mapped folder, click start and then My Computer. In the Network Drives section, right-click the network drive you want to disconnect and then click Disconnect.