

Basic Maintenance in Windows

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Introduction

This document is to help you undertake some Basic Maintenance in Windows.

*This document was prepared by Bill Rosoman Dip CS in March 2013, for Huntly Senior net.
website <http://seniornet.webng.com>
email huntlysenior@gmail.com*

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Some Windows Rules

Rule 1 THOU SHALL NOT USE (NEVER EVER);

MS Internet Explorer

MS Outlook

MS Outlook Express

Reason Too Many Bugs and made by Microsoft.

Rule 2 THOU SHALL USE (ALWAYS AND ALWAYS);

Google Chrome Internet Browsing

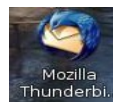
<http://support.google.com/chrome/bin/answer.py?hl=en&answer=95346>

Mozilla Firefox Internet Browsing

<http://download.mozilla.org/?lang=en-GB&product=firefox-19.0&os=win>

Mozilla Thunderbird Email

<https://www.mozilla.org/EN/thunderbird/>



Explorer++ to replace Windows File Explorer (a shocking MS program)

<http://explorerplusplus.com/>

Rule 3 THOU SHALL (AT LEAST WEEKLY/MONTHLY);

Run Virus checker

Run Clean Manager

Run Spyware

Run Defragger

As well as keep your virus checker up to date.

Rule 4 THOU SHALL (ALWAYS AND ALWAYS);

Use a gmail, yahoo or MS live email and not a NZ ISP email account.

If you change ISP or move overseas you loose all your emails.

Rule 5 THOU SHALL (ALWAYS AND ALWAYS);

Use Google Search when you have a problem.

Take a Deep Breath and have a Cup of Tea!!!!!!

Ask a techno friend or

Email Bill leftfieldnz@gmail.com

Rule 6 THOU SHALT SAVE YOUR WORK OFTEN

The number of times I have heard people losing many hours work because they did not save their work is amazing.

Please save your work often. I also save different versions of documents doc1 doc2 etc. This prevents stuff ups that may occur.

Rule 7 THOU SHALL (ALWAYS AND ALWAYS);

HAVE FUN AND GIVE IT A GO, LOL!

Kia Kaha

The Basics

You must carry out some basic maintenance on your computer or you will have problems.

Most computers nowadays come with an anti-virus program. However, many people fail to keep their database of virus definitions updated. All the major anti-virus programs come with an update feature that should be used regularly. Having to update daily is now routine since new malware appears constantly.(Note that anti-virus programs actually protect against a variety of malware, not just viruses.)



You need to have a good Viruses Checker, a good Spyware Cleaner and a good Firewall to keep as many of the nasties from the Internet at bay.

Some Suggestions for Software

NB all the suggested software is free.

virus checker

windows security essentials

<http://www.microsoft.com/en-us/download/details.aspx?id=29942>

Avast

<http://www.avast.com/index>

Adaware

<http://lavasoft.com/>

spyware

spybot

<http://www.safer-networking.org/mirrors/>

firewall

make sure to activate the windows firewall from the windows security centre.

Defragmenter

Auslogics Defragger.

<http://www.freenew.net/windows/auslogics-disk-defrag-321/41843.htm>

Windows System Restore is a windows utility

Chkdsk is a windows utility

clean manager is a windows utility

there is a zip compressed file with the shortcuts for these utilities available at

https://docs.google.com/file/d/0B5ouy_MWt-Z9b1NJZTF2WUtMQ0U/edit?usp=sharing

Just click and unzip to the desktop.

Updating anti-spyware protection

These days, anti-virus programs are insufficient to guard against all malware. Anti-spyware programs are also needed and like anti-virus programs must be updated regularly. Some programs are automatic some are not. If you do not see the Virus Checker and Spyware Cleaner Automatically Updating, right click on the program on the right hand side of the toolbar and update from there.

Preparing for disaster

Unfortunately, hard drive failure is not all that uncommon. If it occurs, everything that is on the drive is lost (unless you resort to an expensive recovery service). Also, if you do get a virus, a lot of your disk may be wiped out. Or, in a variety of other ways, files may be corrupted or lost. Botched software installations, system crashes, or just plain carelessness can lose valuable data. Thus, backups are essential. Ideally, the whole system should be backed up to some external storage device. At a minimum, all files such as passwords, favourite places, address books, financial and tax records, important documents and correspondence (including e-mail), and any other personal data that has more than transitory value should be backed up to some place other than your hard drive. Windows System Restore are not sufficient since they write to the main disk.

There are a variety of strategies for regular backup. An option is to use an external USB drive and one of the imaging programs like Norton Ghost However, since many Computer users will balk at anything that isn't as simple as possible,

You can also backup photos, files etc. to the cloud using Google Drive or Dropbox. This way you can also share with family and friends. If you have a gmail account then you can use that by logging into Google Drive.

Using System Restore

System Restore does not replace a regular backup procedure but the Windows XP/Vista/7/8 accessory. System Restore is a valuable tool that can remedy many common problems.

System Restore will restore your System to a previous date, but it wipes out all changes made after the Restore Date, so only should be used as a last resort, or if you have good back ups of all your important data.

Disk Maintenance

Making sure that your hard drives are healthy is an important part of maintenance.

Windows XP does not seem to need de fragmenting as often as previous Windows systems but regular maintenance should still include running the system tool Disk Defragmenter.

System Tools

XP/Vista/7

Start > All Programs > Accessories > System Tools

Disk cleanup

Disk Defragmenter

System Restore

Personally I do not like the windows defragger, and recommend Auslogics Defragger.

<http://www.auslogics.com/en/software/disk-defrag/>

File Maintenance

A certain amount of file housekeeping will help your system to be more efficient and stable. Windows programs use a lot of temporary files, which can accumulate at an alarming rate. In particular, the folders Temporary Internet Files and certain Temp folders can really build up. Keeping these and some other system folders clean is discussed on this page. Making use of the Windows system tool Disk Cleanup is described here.

Disc Cleanup An easy way to clean out most of the useless data laying around on your hard drive. You will find it in Start->Programs->Accessories->System Tools.

System Tools

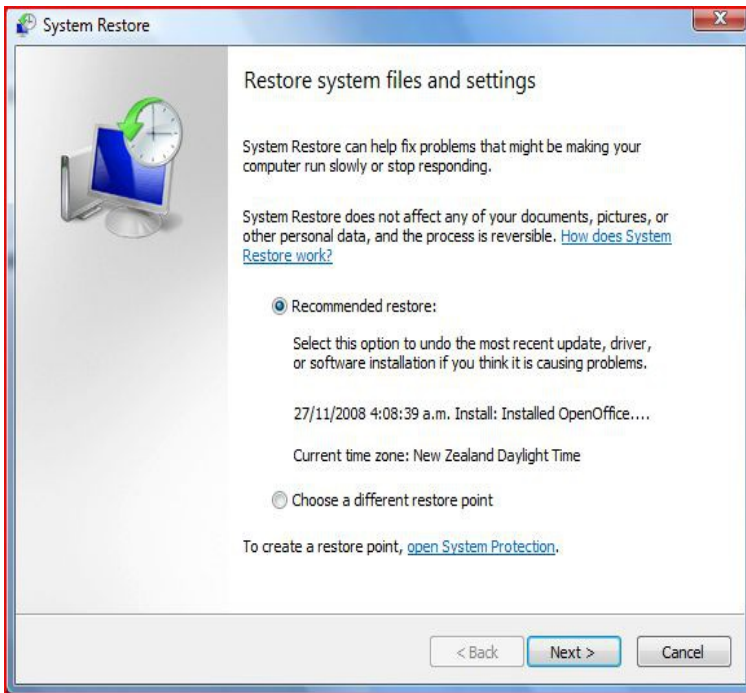
XP/Vista/7

Start > All Programs > Accessories > System Tools

Disk cleanup

Disk Defragmenter

System Restore



Automatic Windows Updates

1. Click Start, and then click Control Panel.

Depending on which Control Panel view you use, Classic or Category, do one of the following:

2. Click System, and then click the Automatic Updates tab.

3. Click Performance and Maintenance, click System, and then click the Automatic Updates tab.

4. Click the option that you want. Make sure Automatic Updates is not turned off.

5. If you do not have good access to the internet you may consider turning automatic updates and do them Manually when it is convenient.

Some more Advanced Stuff

Check the Hard Disk (Chkdsk)

Every Microsoft operating system since DOS back in the dark ages, has contained a tool for repairing corrupted file or folder structures and checking for bad disk sectors. In DOS it was called Chkdsk, in Windows 9X/Me it was called Scandisk, and in Windows XP (and Vista) we are back to the name Chkdsk.

Chkdsk can also serve as an early warning that a hard drive is deteriorating. Disks gradually wear out and sectors may become bad. If Chkdsk starts finding bad sectors, that is a sign that a drive may need replacing. Unfortunately, many hard drive failures are sudden but nonetheless Chkdsk is an

important line of defence.

When to Use CHKDSK

It doesn't matter if you are using a laptop PCs or desktop it is quite obvious that sometimes your PC automatically gets turned off abruptly. The reason behind this can be anything like instant power failure, crashed operating system, etc. Whatsoever the case is if this instantaneous turning off keeps on happening every now and then it may either damage your hard disk by creating bad sectors in it or sometimes it may also create some errors and may prevent you from accessing the data stored in some particular sectors which became unreadable. To rectify these problems a feature named CHKDSK (Check Disk) is provided by Microsoft which, when executed, scans for and fixes errors in the hard disks.

As a Windows 8 user if you want to fix errors of your hard disk you are required to follow the steps given below:

- 1 Logon to Windows 8 computer with administrative privileges.
- 2 Create a shortcut of CMD.EXE file on the desktop. (Path for the file is C:\Windows\System32).
- 3 Right click on the created desktop shortcut and from the available menu click on Runs as administrator.
- 4 From the appeared User Account Control (UAC) confirmation box click on Yes button.
- 5 On the opened command box type CHKDSK command followed by the drive letter with colon sign.
- 6 Provide appropriate parameters like /F or /R to fix errors of the hard disk or to repair bad sectors and extract readable information from them respectively. (E.g. CHKDSK C: /F or CHKDSK C: /R)
- 7 Hit enter key to execute the provided command.

<http://windows8themes.org/how-to-run-chkdsk-in-windows-8.html>

For older systems

ScanDisk or now called Chkdsk

Defragging puts scattered files back together again, ScanDisk in older versions of Windows checks your hard drive (or any other drive) and all files and folders on the disk for logical errors or damage and, if asked to, automatically corrects any problems it may find.

It's widely believed that Windows XP and Windows Vista don't have ScanDisk, but that's only partly true. It's disguised. Open Windows Explorer, (Windows Key + E is the easy way)

In Windows Explorer right-click the icon of the disk that you want to check. (You may need to click

on the "Computer" or "My Computer" icon first to display your disk or disks.)

Click Properties, and then click the Tools tab. Under Error-checking, click Check Now.

Under Check disk options, check the Automatically fix file system errors and Scan for and attempt recovery of bad sectors check boxes.

Click Start. This process may take some time, but you can carry on using other programs.

You may see a dialogue box like the one on the right. Just click the Schedule disk check button and the machine will do a disk check on the next reboot.

Run ScanDisk or Error Check about once a month on your hard disk or disks.

System File Checker

Only use this when things go really bad!

System File Checker can be a life saver. It checks that all windows files are where they should be and uncorrupted, it then puts things right. If you've done all your virus checking, error checking and defragging, and Windows is still doing strange things, then SFC can be your saviour.

A persistent belief has it that SFC isn't available in XP. Not so. It isn't available in Windows Me, but can be downloaded from the nice guys at Microsoft if you're saddled with that unheralded version of Windows.

<http://www.eightforums.com/tutorials/3047-sfc-scannow-command-run-windows-8-a.html>

To Run the SFC /SCANNOW Command in Windows 8

- 1 Logon to Windows 8 computer with administrative privileges.
- 2 Create a shortcut of CMD.EXE file on the desktop. (Path for the file is C:\Windows\System32).
- 3 Right click on the created desktop shortcut and from the available menu click on Runs as administrator.

2. In the elevated command prompt, type sfc /scannow and press Enter. (see screenshot below)

NOTE: This may take a while to finish running.

3. When the scan is complete, hopefully you will see an all is OK message unlike the screenshot below.

NOTE: Luckily SFC was able to repair my corrupted system files automatically.

Click Start » Run, then, if you're running Windows 98 or Windows 2000, in the little dialogue box type sfc, then click OK and follow the instructions.

In Window XP click Start/Run, then type sfc » scannow, then click OK and follow the instructions. This is probably the source of the confusion. Why Microsoft felt the uncontrollable urge to change something which everyone was happy with, we'll never know.

Problems with System File Checker and the accursed restoration disk

If sfc finds something wrong, it prompts you to place your Windows CD in the drive. It won't accept a restoration disk. Major reason for demanding a full Windows CD with - usually - nice holograms whenever you purchase a Windows computer.

There's a way around this which often works. Open Windows Explorer, Click on C: drive, click on the Windows folder. i386 is a sub folder of the Windows folder. Copy the complete i386 folder onto a blank CD. Use this CD when prompted by sfc.

It's best if you do this copying as soon as possible after a clean installation, just in case something nasty or someone nosey messes about with the files in i386 before you copy them. But better late than never.

SFC in Windows Vista

In Vista they've made SFC even more obtuse. You need to open a Command Window in Administrator

mode:

click Start,

click All Programs, then Accessories,

right click on the Command Prompt option,

on the drop down menu which appears, click on the 'Run as Administrator' option.

If you haven't disabled User Account Control (and you shouldn't!) you will be asked for authorisation. Click the Continue button if you are the administrator or insert the administrator password.

In the Command Prompt window, type: sfc /scannow, press Enter.

You'll see "the system scan will begin".

The scan may take some time and windows will repair/replace any corrupt or missing files. You will be asked to insert your Vista DVD if it's needed.

Close the Command Prompt Window when the job is finished.

Note

If SFC could not fix something, then run the command again to see if it may be able to the next time. Sometimes it may take running the `sfc /scannow` command 3 or more times to completely fix everything that it's able to.

If not, then you could do a refresh of Windows 8, or run a System Restore using a restore point dated before the bad file occurred to fix it. You may need to repeat doing a System Restore until you find a older restore point that may work.

If still not, then you can use the steps in the TIP box in the OPTION THREE section below to manually replace the files that SFC could not fix.

Basic Backups, Saving Data

There are some hard and fast rules I am afraid.

You should always regularly save your work to disk. Do save and often. It is no good to go several hours and then loose all your efforts. It is not the Computers problem it is the "Nut behind the Wheel!" I also make different version as I do large projects. Doc1, Doc2 etc.

Next you have to do backups of your data often. Backup to CD/DVD or an external hard drive or pen drive or in the Cloud on Google Drive. If your computer dies or is stolen it is too late to cry about it. Do Backups Often!

These things are also part of the previous section about basic maintenance.

Basic Windows Commands

To make things a lot quicker using various Windows Programs is easy using a few of the Shortcut Keys,

CTRL+C	Copy
CTRL+V	Paste
CTRL+X	Cut
CTRL+P	Print
CTRL+S	Save
CTRL+O	Open
CTRL+B	Bold

CTRL+U	Underline
CTRL+N	New File
CTRL+E	Center
CTRL+A	Select All
CTRL+R	Replace
F5	Reload/refresh or Go to a Page
F2	Rename
F3 or CTRL+F	Find
F7	Spell Check
HOME	Beginning of line
CTRL+HOME	Beginning of file
END	End of Line
CTRL+END	End of File
DEL	Delete
ALT+F4	Exit Program
ALT+F1	Menu
F12	Bullets
Home	Beginning of Row
End	End of Row
Ctrl+Home	Beginning of File
Ctrl+End	End of File
Del	Delete Highlighted
Insert	Toggle between Insert and Over type
Page Up	Up One Screen
Page Down	Down One Screen
Caps Lock	Capitals
Shift+Key	Capital or alternative Key

These are the Basic Command Short Cuts, of Cause you can go File > Save with you mouse but the Keyboard Short Cuts are so much easier and better on the hands.

Disclaimer

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Easy as Pie!

Bill Rosoman Dip CS

Glen Afton

New Zealand

Phone +64-212335427

Email leftfieldnz@gmail.com

www.webng.com/leftfieldnz

www.creativekiwis.com

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Bill Rosoman Dip CS, nugrownz@yahoo.com.au