

WINDOWS UTILITIES

Administrator privileges are needed to run most of these utilities

ScanDisk for Windows XP

1. Double-click My Computer
2. Highlight a local hard disk drive, i.e. C, by clicking on it once.
3. Right-click the highlighted local drive
4. Click properties
5. Click the tools tab and click check now to check the drive for errors.
6. The computer will need to restart in order to run scandisk in Safe Mode. In this case the computer should automatically go into Safe Mode and then re-start in Normal mode when it's done. See below if you need to enter or exit Safe Mode manually.

Safe Mode

Windows 2000 / XP / Vista

Tip: If you are running Safe Mode because you cannot get into Windows you may want to first try loading the last known good configuration.

To get into the Windows 2000 / XP Safe mode, as the computer is booting press and hold the "F8 Key" which should bring up the "Windows Advanced Options Menu" as shown below. Use your arrow keys to move to "Safe Mode" and press your Enter key.

Note: With some computers if you press and hold a key as the computer is booting you will get a stuck key message. If this occurs, instead of pressing and holding the "F8 key", tap the "F8 key" continuously until you the startup menu appears.

Trouble Getting into Windows 2000 or Windows XP Safe mode - If after several attempts you are unable to get into Windows 2000 or Windows XP Safe Mode as the computer is booting into Windows, turn off your computer. When the computer is turned on the next time Windows should notice that the computer did not successfully boot and give you the Safe Mode screen.

How do I get out of Safe Mode?

From Windows Safe Mode click Start / Shutdown and restart the computer. This should start the computer automatically back into Normal Mode.

Note: Many users believe that they are still in Safe Mode because the colors or video may not look correct. Unless in the corners of the screen it says "Safe Mode", you are not in Safe Mode.

If you are rebooting the computer and it is rebooting back into Safe Mode (it does say "Safe Mode" in each of the corners), it is likely another problem exists with Windows preventing it from loading into Normal Windows.

Defragment Your Disk Drives in Windows XP

As you save files windows puts them in the first available space. When you delete files you leave an empty spot. If that spot isn't large enough for the next file Windows tries to save there, the remainder is placed elsewhere. Eventually, bits and pieces of files are every which where and it takes longer to access files. Also, any time your pc shuts down unexpectedly, i.e. power outage, pieces of files that are usually deleted when you close a program, are left around.

1. Open My Computer.
2. Right-click the local disk volume that you want to defragment, and then click **Properties**.
3. On the **Tools** tab, click **Defragment Now**.
4. Click **Defragment**.

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Windows XP Back-up Utility

<http://support.microsoft.com/kb/320820> has instructions for this process.

Windows Update

Windows Vista

1. Click on the **Start Menu**.
2. Click on **All Programs**.
3. Click on **Windows Update**.
4. When the window comes up, click **Check for updates** in the top left corner of the window.
5. Once it finishes checking for updates, click **Install updates** to install any new updates.

Note: If Install Updates does not appear, it means that there are no new updates available for your computer

Windows XP

1. Open Internet Explorer.

Note: Windows Update only works using Internet Explorer on Microsoft Windows.

2. Go to <http://windowsupdate.microsoft.com>. The page will scan your computer to determine what updates are necessary.
3. You will be presented with two updating options:
 - o **Express:** This is the recommended option to find all needed high-priority updates.
 - o **Custom:** This option will scan for high-priority updates and optional updates, such as drivers or software updates.
4. You will then be presented with a list of updates.
 - o **If you chose Express, click Install Updates.**
 - o **If you chose Custom, you will be presented with a list of high-priority update options.** Check the updates that you would like to install. On the left-hand side, you will have an option to review software and hardware updates. Select any desired updates from these categories. Once you have selected all desired updates, click **Review and Install Updates**. You will now be presented with a list of your chosen updates, verify it is correct and choose **Install Updates**.
5. A dialog box will open to display the download and installation progress. If you are prompted for any license agreements, you will need to accept them.
6. Wait for the updates to download and install. When they are done you will be prompted to restart your computer.
7. It is a good idea to repeat the process until you are sure there aren't any more critical updates. Often, installing a major update like a Service Pack makes a whole new set of important updates available.

Windows XP - Configuring for Automatic Updates

After completing the entire update procedure it's important to stay current. Windows has a built in feature that allows users to set their machines to auto update

To configure Windows XP for Automatic Updates:

1. Click on the **Start** button and then select the **Control Panel**.
2. Click **Performance and Maintenance**.

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Note - If the **Performance and Maintenance** category isn't visible, click Switch to Category View on the upper left of the window.

3. Click **System** to open the System Properties dialog box.
4. On the Automatic Updates tab, check the box next to "Keep my computer up to date." Choose a setting. We strongly recommend choosing "Download the updates automatically and notify me when they are ready to be installed."
5. Apply and the changes and click **OK**.
6. After you've set up Automatic Updates, you will see a notification balloon in the lower right portion of the screen (task bar). Click the notification balloon to review and install downloads.

Note: Automatic Updates do not download non-critical updates. Also, it will not download critical updates released before you set up your Automatic Updates

Microsoft Update

Microsoft Update is a service that works similarly to Windows Update, but allows you to update all your Microsoft (other than Windows) products in one place.

1. Go to <http://windowsupdate.microsoft.com>.
2. Click the **Go** button next to **Get Microsoft Update today**
3. Click the **Start Now** button.
4. Review the license agreement and click the **Continue** button.
5. The website may ask you to install an ActiveX control to view the site. If prompted to do so, click the yellow bar at the top of the website and select **Install ActiveX control**.
6. A dialog box will pop-up prompting you to install software, click the **Install** button.
7. After you have installed Microsoft Update, when you visit <http://windowsupdate.microsoft.com> , you will be taken to Microsoft Update.

How often?

1. ScanDisk – monthly and if you have
2. Defrag – monthly unless you rarely save files to your hard drive, then every few months is ok
3. Back-up – at least weekly. Whatever method you use you should set it to automatically back up data files – documents, pictures, music. If you have a large enough back up device you should also back up software. You should also back-up browser Favorites / Bookmarks; and any templates you create. If your hard drive “dies” you will wish that you did!
4. Windows Update – if you set it up for automatic updates (either notify or download or install) you won't need to worry about CRITICAL updates, but it still doesn't manage optional updates, so perhaps quarterly you should manually run it.
5. Microsoft Update – quarterly is probably plenty. Security holes which are plugged usually show up in Windows critical updates.