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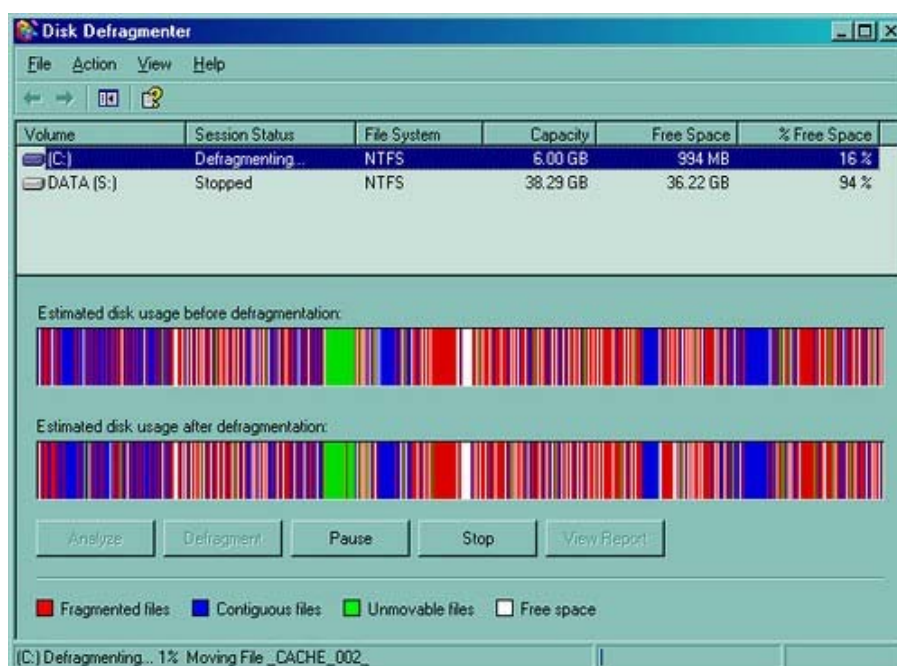
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How to Defragment Computer

When your computer writes information onto your hard drive, it does not always write information in the same location on the actual hardware. A section of a file can be written near the beginning of the disc, whereas the rest of that file could be written near the end. This causes programs to run slowly, as the computer spends time in retrieving these file clusters from all over the disc. Defragmenting your computer sorts all of your files [as well as free space] in an orderly manner, in effort to reduce loading time. Here is how to do it.

Steps

1. **Uninstall any programs you do not use or need.** It is best to uninstall programs prior to a defragmentation, as the newly-acquired free space will generally be located all over the hard drive, thereby giving rise to fragmentation.
2. **Make sure that all unnecessary programs are closed.**
3. **Cancel any programs that are scheduled to run.** If you have not manually scheduled any programs to run, then skip this step.
4. **Delete any temporary files.** This is done by running Disk Cleanup. To run the program, go to: START - Run, and enter **cleanmgr** in the window.
5. **Run the Disk Defragmenter Program.** Go to START - Run, and enter **dfrg.msc** in the window. A window that is similar to the one below should appear:





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Make sure that your desired drive is selected [**C:** being the default drive], and click on the Defragment button.

6. Sit back and relax as your computer organizes your fragmented files.

Tips

- Defragment your computer overnight. If you have never defragmented your computer before, and you have a large hard drive, the process can take several hours.
- You can also access the Disk Defragmenter via the Start menu by going to START -> Programs -> Accessories -> System Tools -> Disk Defragmenter.
- The more often that you run the defragmenter, the quicker the process will be. Generally, once per month is good.
- Remember that defragmenting takes the saved portions of all of your files and organizes them to help your computer run more efficiently. Keep in mind that some files (such as critical system files and boot procedure files) cannot be moved.
- An alternative to defragmenting is the use of a program called Diskeeper. It is very useful, since it can defragment your computer while your screen saver is running. You can work (or play) on your computer when you're defragmenting because it has a technology called I/O smart, where if your computer is doing something big, it will pause until your computer is finishing. You can also set the priority for defragmenting so that it won't pause every time that you do something little.

Warnings

- If you are using Windows 95, 98, or ME, do not use your computer during the defragmenting process, since this may restart or hinder the process.
- While uninstalling, if you are unsure what a program does, don't remove it until you know for sure if you need it or not.

How to Keep Computer Running Smoothly

Computers are often the most important single items that you can have, and having to reformat can mean a significant loss of time and information. In order to avoid the panic associated with file loss and/or corruption, a few preventative steps can be taken.

Steps

1. Delete unused programs. They take up useful memory. If you're a pack rat and just can't seem to part with these files, save them to disk for future reference if needed.



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2. Use the Chameleon Startup Manager tool to check which programs are starting at the boot time. Some common tools (Acrobat Reader, HP printer driver, Java scheduler) have a nasty habit to "call home" and check for updates. You can uncheck those programs. If a program is not immediately required upon Windows start, you can specify a delayed startup (we recommend several minutes) or upon what program this program should be started.
3. Create system restore points regularly. Do this at least once a week. If weaker viruses are accidentally downloaded, the restore point will ensure that your data is recoverable.
4. Create backup disks. Backup any files that you use on a regular basis or files that are updated frequently. In the unfortunate event of a hard drive crash, you won't panic about lost work.
5. Perform a scan disk operation. Periodically perform a scan disk to make sure that your files are all in working order. This scan should be performed about once a week.
6. Defragment. Defragmenting your computer will guarantee that your files are organized and your computer is running at optimal speeds. This should be done at least once a month.
7. Use anti-spyware software. These programs can rid your computer of unwanted spyware, greyware, and malware.
8. Utilize anti-virus protection. If you can't afford an anti-virus program (or don't want one because of the negative effects it can have on your computer), simply conduct a free online virus scan. Two of the most trusted scans are TrendMicro and Panda.
9. Delete cookies and clear your cache after you sign off. These files are completely unnecessary, take up memory, and can allow spyware to invade your computer.

Tips

- When downloading files onto your computer, always use caution and good sense. Do not download files from unknown senders or sites that you do not fully trust.

5 Steps to Get and Keep Your Computer Running at Full Speed

Most people always wonder why their computer seems to be running slow. They forget, that like a car, a computer also needs maintenance. There are certain steps you can take, to ensure a faster running and more efficient computer operation. This article assumes you are running Microsoft Windows.

Steps

1. Update your Operating System regularly to ensure that the operating system is updated with the latest security patches. To check whether you have the latest update, click on the Start Menu - Programs and select the Windows Update icon.
2. Know what is running on your computer as this will increase your ability to identify potential harmful processes. Call up the Windows Task Manager (press CTRL+ALT+DEL) and familiarize yourself with the processes running at any point in time. Use the Chameleon



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Startup Manager tool to check which programs are starting at the boot time. Some common tools (Acrobat Reader, HP printer driver, Java scheduler) have a nasty habit to "call home" and check for updates. You can uncheck those programs. If a program is not immediately required upon Windows start, you can specify a delayed startup (we recommend several minutes) or upon what program this program should be started.

3. Install firewall software or use the Windows firewall. To activate your Windows Firewall click on your control panel and select Windows Firewall. Switch the firewall on by ticking the "On" radio button.
4. Do a complete maintenance on your computer, at least once a month. This includes a Disk Defragmenter. Click on start->accessories->system tools->disk cleanup->disk defragmenter.
5. Have an updated anti-virus software running on your system. Make sure that the anti-virus software is updated frequently (sometimes even daily if need be) with fixes to the actual engine and to the database files that contain the latest cures against new viruses, worms and Trojans. Use spywares detection tools (Spybot, AdAware) once in a while, since not all spywares are detected by anti-virus softwares.

Tips

- Find and download free Spyware, and virus protectors on the internet.
- Most of the virus protectors come with maintenance programs that has a setting for you to have maintenance scheduled automatically.
- If you delete files often, then do the maintenance program, after deleting. Defrag fills the empty spaces left by deletions, that cause the computer to drag or work slowly.

Warnings

- By not maintaining and cleaning your computer, you will get error messages, slow running, and will not be as efficient. Get into the habit of running System Cleanup often.
- You maintain your car to run smoothly, well do the same thing with your computer.

How to Speed up a Windows XP Computer

If not properly maintained, the performance of all Windows XP systems will eventually degrade. To counteract this slow-down, scheduling a computer shop visit isn't your only option; you can correct performance issues yourself. Save money and squeeze more speed out of Windows XP!

Steps

1. Defragment Your Computer - This will place similar files physically closer on the hard disk to improve load speeds.
 - Click start, again, then click run.

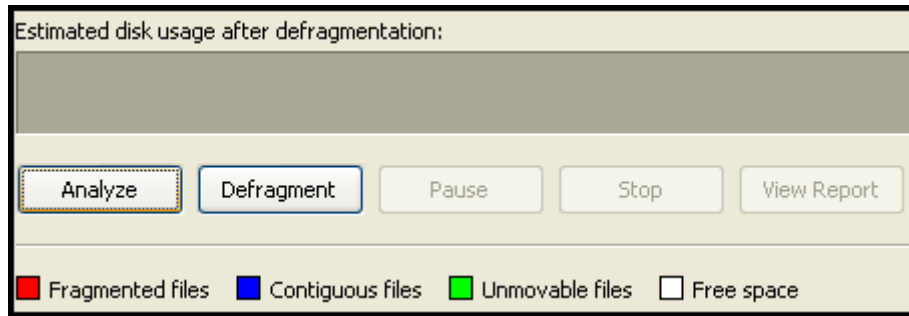


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- o Type "**dfmg.msc**" in the text field.
- o Click Defragment to start it.



2. **Stop unwanted Start-Up programs.**

- o Download Chameleon Startup Manager. Install the software you have just downloaded.
- o Disable any programs you do not want load automatically.
- o If a program is not immediately required upon Windows start, you can specify a delayed startup (we recommend several minutes) or upon what program this program should be started.

Delay	Title	Path
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	CTFMON.EXE	✓ C:\WINDOWS\system32\ctfmon.exe
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 120	nod32kui	✓ "C:\Program Files (x86)\Eset\nod32kui.e
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 5	nTrayFw	✓ "C:\Program Files (x86)\NVIDIA Corpora
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 10	DAEMON Tools	✓ "C:\Program Files (x86)\DAEMON Tools\
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	NvMediaCenter (x64 key)	✓ C:\WINDOWS\system32\RUNDLL32.EXE
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	NvCplDaemon (x64 key)	✓ C:\WINDOWS\system32\RUNDLL32.EXE
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 10	NVMixerTray (x64 key)	✓ "C:\Program Files (x86)\NVIDIA Corpora
<input type="checkbox"/>	SunJavaUpdateSched	✗ "C:\Program Files (x86)\Java\jre1.5.0_1

Temporarily disabled program

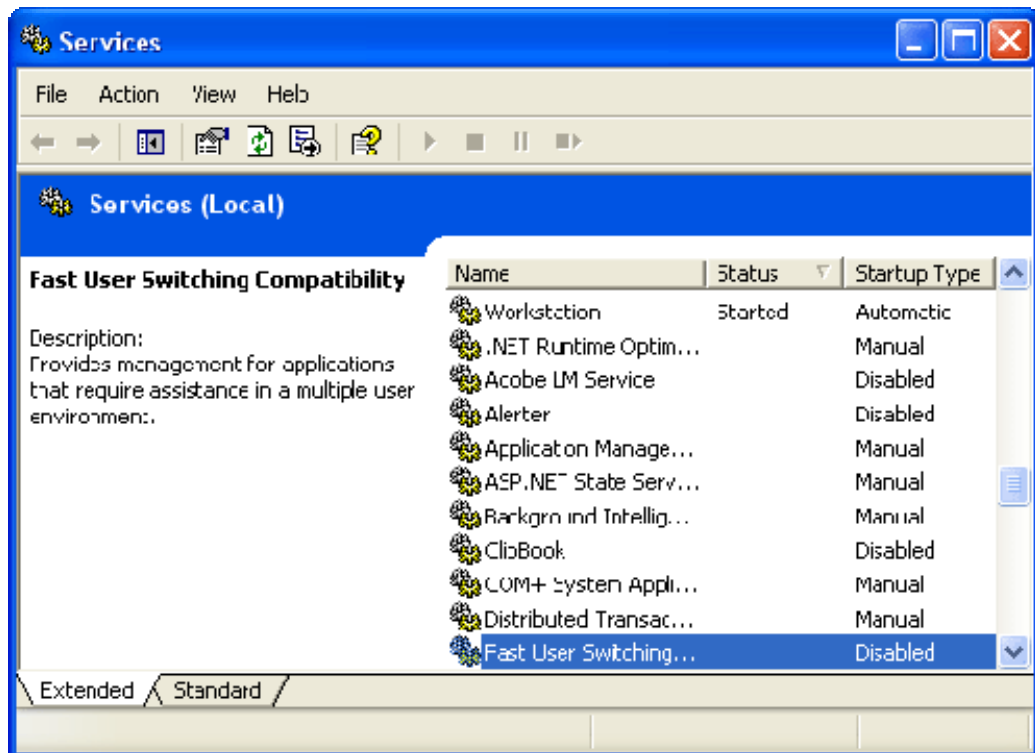
- o Disable Services you do not use or need. Open control panel, open Administrative Tools, and select Services. Disabling the wrong Services may lead to serious problems that you may not notice right away. Please consult a reference such as overclockersclub.com for information on specific Windows XP Services.



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3. Remove Spyware and Viruses

- Spyware and viruses are a leading cause of computer slowing. Update and run your spyware and virus software weekly. If you do not have tools installed to protect against malware, spyware, and viruses, download a free copy of AVG's Anti-Virus and/or Anti-Spyware software (free for personal use). Also, Microsoft's Windows Defender is a widely-used anti-spyware tool that is currently distributed freely for users with a "Genuine" copy of Windows. Windows Defender will be included with other Microsoft services and products such as Live and Vista.
- Download and install Mozilla Firefox from <http://www.mozilla.com>. It will allow you to import all of your Internet Explorer settings, and is much less prone to malware than Microsoft Internet Explorer. It will prompt you with a "Set as Default Browser" message. Check "Don't show this again" and click "Yes".

4. Perform a disk clean up.

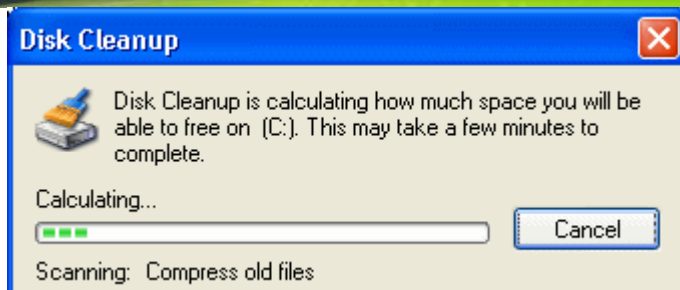
- Click start in the bottom left corner, then click run.
- Type, "cleanmgr.exe" in the text field. Press "OK". This can take a while if you have never done it before.



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- 5.
6. **Remove unwanted software.**
 - o Click start, then click control panel.
 - o Click add/remove programs.
 - o Highlight any old software you do not use and then click "remove".
7. **Make Windows load faster**
 - o Click Start, and then Run.
 - o Type in 'msconfig' and press enter.
 - o Click on the BOOT.INI tab at the top.
 - o Over to the right there will be a box labelled Timeout with 30 in it. Change the 30 to a 3.
8. **Speed Up Processing Time**
 - o Turning off the fancy Windows XP graphics will noticeably increase the speed of your computer.
 - o Go to Start, (Settings), Control Panel, and System. NOTE: You may need to 'Switch to Classic Mode' to see the System applet.
 - o Go to the Advanced tab. Click the Settings button under Performance.
 - o Select the 'Adjust for best performance' radio button, then Apply, and OK.
 - o The graphics aren't as flashy, but your computer will run a lot faster.

Tips

- If this is your first defrag, do it after the disk clean up twice, then a disk defrag, and then another disk clean up.
- Do all the above steps quite often to keep the speed of your PC going.
- Although time-intensive, a re-partition and re-format of the hard disk drive, along with a clean installation of Windows XP will improve performance. Performing this task will remove all of your existing data, so a back-up or file copy is recommended first. Only save the files you created, as you will need to reinstall each application on the new installation of Windows. If you did not change the default location when saving documents, it may be safe to copy only the user folder and all files and folders within it (i.e.: "C:\Documents and Settings\"). Typically, most users will need to be sure to copy these files:
 - o Documents created using applications such as Microsoft Word or similar office suite programs
 - o Bookmarks/Favourites from your Internet browser
 - o Fonts installed that are not included by default with Windows (note that some fonts are installed by applications).



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- E-mail in-box and folders if you use an e-mail client that does not use an Internet browser
- Any schedule data for programs such as Outlook
- Financial records for programs such as Quicken
- Optimize the registry either manually or with a third-party application. Many of these registry tweaking programs are available on the Internet, including commercial applications that are released as free trials. If you are not familiar with the registry, do not edit it manually -- the registry is vital to Windows' operation.

Warnings

- Always create a restore point before uninstalling software, even better before you start any step.