

Computer Learning Center Users' Group

Selected Windows Settings

Introduction. The purpose of this presentation is to introduce appearance options for your Windows desktop, not to dictate which appearance choice is correct. Experiment with your own computer to discover which combination of settings works the best for you.

Display Properties

Right-click on the open desktop (or select the Display icon on the Control Panel)

Select **Properties** on the resulting menu

- The **Themes** tab

- *Select a theme from the list, or save your own*

Click Apply

- The **Desktop** tab

- *Select a background picture for the desktop.*

Click Browse.

Navigate to and select a “jpg” or “bmp” file

Click Open

When the Display Properties menu returns, click Apply

On the Position menu, experiment with each of the options by selecting it and then clicking Apply.

The Color option only applies if you are not using a background picture

- *Click Customize Desktop*

Desktop Icons determines whether icons for each function automatically appear on the desktop.

Recommendation: Select My Computer, My Documents, and Internet Explorer

- *Desktop Cleanup*

Recommendation: Uncheck the Run Desktop Cleanup Wizard every 60 days.

Click OK

Click Apply if it is available

- The **Screen Saver** tab

- *Select a Screen Saver. For example:*

Select Marquee

Select 10 minutes in the Wait box

Leave the On resume, password protect box unchecked

Click the Settings button

Under Position, select Random

Under Speed, position the slider in the middle

In the Text box, type: Not all who wander are lost.

Click the Format Text button

Under Size, select 72

Under Effects select Fuchsia as the color

Click OK, returning you to the Marquee Setup window

Click OK, returning you to the Display Properties Screen Saver tab

Click the Preview button to see the results of your work

➤ *Click the Power button to select power options*

You probably don't need to deal with the power settings unless you have a laptop. If so, check the settings to make sure the system is not staying active and draining the battery.

▪ **The Appearance Tab**

➤ *Windows and buttons: keep or select the Windows XP Style*

➤ *Color Scheme: select a color*

➤ *Font Size: select Large Fonts*

Select **Effects** button

Use the following transition effect for menus and tooltips:

Select Fade Effect

Use the following method to smooth edges of screen fonts: (At home, try the various options to see which one makes the words on the screen look the clearest. Leaving the box unchecked works best for my flat panel monitor. Clear Type is recommended for laptops and other flat panels.)

Use large icons

Click OK to return to the Appearance tab

The **Advanced** button.

Select Icon. You can change the font style and size for icon type. Select a larger size and bold if you have trouble reading the type on the monitor.

Click Apply

▪ **The Settings tab**

➤ *Screen Resolution*

Slide to 1024x768

Click Apply. The screen will go black for a moment, then will reappear in the new resolution. If prompted, click OK to accept the setting. (If your screen is already set at 1024x768, set it to 800x600 and back again so you can see what happens.)

➤ *Color Quality*

Confirm that the highest setting is selected

➤ *Advanced (Click button)*

The tabs available here may differ depending on your monitor and video card. However, you should at least run into the following:

General tab

Display: Note the DPI setting at Normal size (96 DPI). The other choices are 120 DPI and Custom. If you are trying to make the screen fonts as large as possible to improve desktop readability, you will want to select 120 DPI at home. Making this change requires Administrator privileges. You can also change font size using the Advanced button under the Appearance tab.

Monitor tab

Monitor type. Displays monitor drive and device status. No setting changes.

Monitor Settings:

Make sure *Hide modes that this monitor cannot display* is checked before you change any of your Display Settings. (Ask me how I know.)

Screen refresh rate: On a crt monitor, an incorrect refresh rate can cause the screen to flicker, driving you mad, causing you to violently murder everyone around you. It can also cause the image to darken on parts of the screen. Adjust the refresh rate to solve these problems.

- Back to the **Themes** tab

If you like the changes, save the theme. Click Save As. Navigate to the folder you want to use, and name the theme.

Click OK to return to the desktop

Arrange Icons By

Right Click on the open Desktop to open the desktop menu

Sort Order of Desktop Icons

- Hover over Arrange Icons By

Another menu will pop up. Select one of the first four choices (Name, Size, Type, Modified.)

Now, Select a different one. You should observe that the desktop icons change order based on the choice you make.

Notice that each time you select something the menu closes. You will have to open it again to select the next item. Clicking on an item checks or unchecks it.

Align to Grid and Show Desktop Icons

- Now that you are done playing around, right click on the desktop again and make sure only the following two items are selected under Arrange Icons By:
 - ✓ Align to Grid
 - ✓ Show Desktop Icons

Delete Icons

Delete all icons except those you use frequently, and you may want to keep the following.

- ✓ My Computer
- ✓ My Documents
- ✓ Internet Explorer
- ✓ Recycle Bin

Move Icons

To move icons, click and drag to the new location.

Start Menu.

Hover your mouse pointer over the Start button. The words “Click here to begin” should appear. If that doesn’t work, click on Start, then push the Esc key to clear the menu. Try hovering again. Remember, hovering means holding the mouse perfectly still over a designated area or item.

Click on Start again to view the contents of the Start Menu. All of the items you see in the start menu are actually shortcuts to programs that also appear in the All Programs list, or to documents you can find using Windows Explorer. We are going to clear the clutter out of this menu.

Hit Esc to clear the menu

Right Click Start

Select Properties. The Taskbar and Start Menu Properties window opens on the Start Menu tab

- **Start Menu tab**

Confirm that the Start Menu radio button is selected

Click Customize

- *The General Tab*

Under Programs: Number of programs on start Menu: select 0.

Click Clear List

On Show on Start Menu, make sure both boxes are checked.

Select your preferred browser and email programs.

- *The Advanced Tab*

Confirm or select the following settings:

Start Menu Settings

- Open submenus when I pause on them with my mouse
- Highlight newly installed programs

Start Menu Items

Control Panel

- Display as a link

- Enable dragging and dropping
- Favorites menu
- Help and Support
- My Computer
 - Display as a link
- My Documents
 - Display as a link
- My Music
 - Don't display this item
- My Network Places
- My Pictures
 - Don't display this item
- Network Connections
 - Don't display this item
- Printers and Faxes
- Run command
- Scroll Programs
- Search
- Set Program Access and Defaults

Recent documents

- List my most recently opened documents

Click Apply

Click OK

We have cleaned almost everything out of the Start Menu. **Click Start** to see how it looks.

If anything that you do not use still appears, right click on it and select **Unpin from Start Menu**. If that choice is unavailable, select **Remove from this list**.

Icons

You have total control over what icons appear on the desktop and in the start menu. We have turned off the features that automatically place icons so we can decide for ourselves what will go where. The decisions you make depend on your preferences and work style.

Click on Start

Hover over All Programs. The menu of all programs on the system will appear.

- **Locate Outlook Express**

Hover over Outlook Express.

Right Click to open the menu

Hover over Send to

When the next menu appears, Select Desktop (create shortcut)

- **Locate Microsoft Word on the list.**

Hover over the Word item on the menu so it is highlighted

Right Click to open the menu

Hover over Send to.

When the next menu appears, Select Desktop (create shortcut)

Hover over Word again.

This time, Select Pin to Start Menu

- **Repeat this process for whatever other icons you choose**

Taskbar

The Taskbar is the plain colored bar along the bottom of the display. The taskbar contains the Start button, the Taskbar (duh), and the Notification area.

The Taskbar location. You can size and move the taskbar. Sometimes this happens by accident so it is a good idea to know how to do it on purpose so you can fix it.

- **Size**

Position the mouse pointer along the top of the Taskbar so it turns into a double arrow.

Click and drag upwards to increase the size of the taskbar.

Now return it to its default size.

- **Position**

Position the mouse pointer in an open area of the Taskbar

Click and drag to the right side of the screen

The top

The left side

Back to the bottom

- **Lock the Taskbar**

You can lock the Taskbar so can not be accidentally moved

Right click in an open area on the Taskbar

Click "Lock the Taskbar"

The Notification Area. The area on the taskbar to the right of the taskbar buttons. The notification area displays the time and can also contain shortcuts that provide quick access to programs, such as Volume Control and Power Options. Other shortcuts can appear temporarily, providing information about the status of activities. For example, the printer shortcut icon appears after a document has been sent to the printer and disappears when printing is complete. (I copied this definition from Help and Support.)

- Hover over the time to see the date
- Double click on the time to change it

- Double click on an icon to open its program window
- To change Notification Area settings, position the pointer anywhere in the Taskbar and right click. The Taskbar Tab will display
 - *Notification Area. Confirm the following settings for the check boxes*
 - Show the Clock
 - Hide inactive icons

Taskbar. Right clicking on the taskbar calls up a menu that controls the way windows display on the desktop, allows selection of toolbars to display on the taskbar, allows selection of taskbar properties, and some other stuff you might want to look at later.

- **Toolbars.** You can select various system toolbars to display in the Taskbar, or create a custom toolbar. For now, unselect everything except the **Quick Launch** toolbar.
- **Taskbar Appearance.** Confirm the following settings for the check boxes
 - Lock the taskbar
 - Auto-hide the taskbar
 - Keep the taskbar on top of other windows
 - Group similar taskbar buttons
 - Show Quick Launch

Quick Launch. The quick launch toolbar holds icons for programs you want to start with one click from the Taskbar. You can copy Desktop Icons to the Quick Launch Toolbar.

- **Select** the My Computer icon on the Desktop
Click and drag to the Quick Launch area on the Taskbar.
- **Repeat** for each Desktop Icon you want to move to the Quick Launch Toolbar. Delete the desktop icon, if desired

Windows Explorer

Introduction. Windows Explorer is the system's file manager. You use it to view and organize your files. You can get to Windows Explorer in several ways, of course: Right click the Start Button, Double click on My Computer or My Documents on the Desktop, Single click on My Computer or My Documents in the Start Menu, or Select All Programs | Accessories | Windows Explorer.

Note: Windows Explorer is the file manager. It is NOT Internet Explorer. These are two completely different things.

Start Windows Explorer: Go to the Start Menu | Click on the My Documents Icon

View

You can control the appearance of part of the Windows Explorer window through the View menu.

- **Select View (Click on View)**
- **Hover over "Toolbars". The toolbars menu will appear.**

Confirm that Standard Buttons is checked and that Address Bar and Links are not checked.

Note that you can Lock the Toolbars, and Customize the Toolbars. Do NOT do either.

- **Back to the View menu, confirm that Status Bar is checked**

Some users will advise unchecking the Status Bar to maximize the display area of the Explorer window. However, valuable info is displayed in the status bar and it does not take up that much room.

Note: Internet Explorer also has a status bar. The above comments apply to it as well. For example when you hover over a link, the status bar displays the internet address to which the link will send you.

- **Explorer Bar.**

The Explorer bar is the left pane of the Explorer window. Hover over Explorer Bar in the View menu to activate the menu of items that can be displayed in the left pane. Select Folders if it is not already checked. Putting the Folders list in the Explorer Bar gives you the best information about your files and folders as you manage them. All of the other items that can be displayed there are available in the Windows Explorer menus.

- **Details**

Back to the View menu, you can control how items in the right pane are displayed. The View menu is one way to do that. Another is through the Views icon on the Standard toolbar. In any event, select Details. A details view displays the most information and sorting works most effectively in this view.

Photos. However, if you are searching/viewing photos, you may want to change the view to thumbnails to display a thumbnail of the photos without having to open each file. To test this, navigate to the More Windows folder. Remember, the photo of my house is hiding there. Change the View to Thumbnails.

Icons. Sometimes an Icon view is the most effective, such as in Control Panel.

- **Arrange Icons By**

Hover over this item in the View menu. Of course you remember these options from the “Right Click on the Desktop” menu we studied in our last class. The same choices are available here, only instead of arranging the desktop icons, you will be arranging the icons (files) in the right pane.

- **Choose Details**

This View menu item lets you choose the columns that will be displayed in the right pane. We will not work with this list in class, but you can take some time at home to decide if you want additional columns displayed.

- **Customize this Folder**

Ditto

- **Go to**

Gives you some choices of other folders to view

- **Refresh**

Click Refresh to confirm that current changes are reflected in the list.

Folder Options Intro. Windows allows you to change the way Windows Explorer displays file and folder information by editing the Folder Options. You can get to Folder Options from several points.

- **Control Panel**

- Click Start

- Select Control Panel

- Select Folder Options

- **Start Button**

- Right Click Start button

- Select Explore

- Select Tools

- Select Folder Options

- **My Computer**

- Locate the My Computer icon on the Desktop, or in the Start Menu. In the Start Menu, click once. On the Desktop, click twice.

- Select Tools

- Select Folder Options

- Note:** to display the left pane (folder outline) and the right pane (selected folder contents) in any Explorer window, click on the Folders icon on the Explorer Bar. If the Folders icon does not appear, select View | Explorer Bar | Folders.

- Reminder:** many of the menu options you encounter are toggles: click once to check, click again to uncheck. It is a good idea to reopen the menu to confirm that you checked/unchecked the correct item.

After reviewing the different paths to Folder Options, let's go back there through the Start Button (Right Click | Select Explore | Select Tools | Select Folder Options.)

Folder Options

- **General Tab**

- *Tasks*

- Show common tasks in folders

- Use Windows classic folders

- *Browse folders*

- Open each folder in the same window

- Open each folder in its own window

- *Click items as follows*

- Single-click to open an item (point to select)

- Double-click to open an item (single-click to select)

- **View tab**

- *Folder views*

Rather than resetting all folders manually, you can apply a particular view option to all folders by clicking the Apply to all folders button

To return the setting to the Windows XP default, click the Reset All Folders button

- *Advanced settings:*

- Automatically search for network folders and printers

- Display file size information in folder tips

- Display simple folder view in Explorer's Folders list

- Display the contents of system folders

- Display the full path in the title bar

- Do not cache thumbnails

Hidden files and folders

- Do not show hidden files and folders

- Show hidden files and folders (select this option if you are an advanced user)

- Hide extensions for known file types (**make sure this box is NOT checked**)

- Hide protected operating system files (Recommended) (uncheck if you are an advanced user)

- Launch folder windows in a separate process

Managing pairs of Web pages and folders

- Show and manage the pair as a single file

- Show both parts and manage them individually

- Show both parts but manage as a single file

- Remember each folder's view settings

- Restore previous folder windows at logon

- Show Control Panel in My Computer

- Show encrypted or compressed NTFS files in color

- Show pop-up description for folder and desktop items

- Use simple file sharing (Recommended)

After confirming all of the above, click on apply

Notice the Restore defaults button. If you get hopelessly muddled, click that button to put the View options back the way they were when Windows XP was installed

- **File Types tab**

Do not change any of these settings unless you are confident you know what you are doing. These settings determine how particular file types are opened. For example,

MS Word puts the .doc extension at the end of the name of each Word file. (Remember, we unchecked the “Hide extensions for known file types” box under the View tab so we could see file extensions.)

Find jpg on the list. Usually the default is for a jpg to open in your browser, such as Internet Explorer or Netscape. I do digital publishing and design web pages. I do not want jpg files to open in Netscape. I want them to open in Adobe Photoshop, my photo editing program. Therefore, I would change this setting so that when I double click on a jpg file, it opens in Photoshop, not Netscape. It does me no good to open the file in Netscape, and is actually annoying because you can’t adjust the view in Netscape to see the whole picture at once. *At home, change this setting to “Windows Picture and Fax Viewer” if you have a problem view photos sent as email attachments.*

If you want to **change the program** a file opens with, click the Change button and pick the preferred program from the list.

Even if a file type is set to open in an undesirable program, you can always use your preferred program by launching the program first, selecting File | Open, and browsing to the file location. Select the file and click Open. Obviously this only works for files the program was designed to open and edit.

If you haven’t already done so, **Click Apply** then close to exit Folder Options

Edit

You can use Right Click to delete files and folders, and Right Click and Drag to copy and move files and folders. You can also use the Edit menu items to accomplish the same tasks. Find out more about files and folders in the CLC files and folders class. Check the schedule on the bulletin board.

Control Panel

To get to the Control Panel, go to **Start | Control Panel**

Accessibility

As you might imagine, these options are designed to improve accessibility/usability for those who might have trouble with the Default windows settings. Each person should go through these options to determine if any of them would make computing easier for them or a member of their family.

Note that the Accessibility Options under Control Panel are different that the Accessibility Programs you can find at Start | All Programs | Accessories | Accessibility

A couple of settings to note are under the **Display tab**: Check out Blink Rate and Width, both dealing with the cursor.

Add Hardware

Generally you will not run into this function. With Windows XP, most everything is plug and play and installs automatically

Add or Remove Programs

You may need this one though.

When you want to remove a program, you do not just find the folder and delete it. Files relating to the program are scattered throughout your computer, and some have names you could not identify with the originating program. Instead, use the Remove function here.

Date and Time

If your computer clock gets out of tune, you can reset it here. (You can also get to the date and time by double clicking on the time display in the Notification area.)

Display

This brings up the same Display Properties window we worked with in Lesson 1.

Folder Options

Another way to change Folder Options.

Fonts

This item takes you to the list of fonts available on your computer.

Internet Options

This is the same menu that show up under Tools | Options in Internet Explorer.

Keyboard

Let's look at these options.

You can adjust how long you can hold a key down before it begins to **repeat**. You can also adjust the **blink rate** of the cursor.

Mouse

There are a few things you can do with the mouse to try to match your style and technique.

- **Buttons**
 - *Button Configuration*
 - Switch primary and secondary buttons
This is for left-handed people.
 - *Double click speed*
Drag the slider to change the setting
 - *Click lock*
Experiment with this to see if it helps you.
- **Pointers**
Pick a custom pointer style at home
- **Pointer Options**
You can slow down the pointer so every little movement does not jerk the mouse away from your target. Experiment with this item if you have been having any mouse troubles: clicking and double clicking.
- **Wheel**
You can adjust the scrolling as well

Scheduled Tasks

This is the scheduler for functions that occur in the background, such as a virus scan or disk cleanup

System

A lot of information about your computer is here. We will look at as much as we can within our time limits. Come back to this and explore.

- **General**

Go here to find out basic info about your computer: Operating system, processor, processor speed, RAM

- **Computer Name**

You won't need this unless you are setting up a network at home

- **Hardware**

- *Add Hardware Wizard*

Here is another way to get at the Add Hardware Wizard.

- *Device Manager*

All the details about your system.

- *Hardware Profiles*

Not relevant to us now

- **Advanced**

ditto

- **System Restore**

While you are merrily taking your computer for granted, it is preparing in the background for disaster. It periodically sets Restore Points to return to if the system becomes unstable and starts crashing. You can also manually create a restore point using the System Restore Wizard. Get there from Help and Support

- **Automatic Updates**

It is a good idea to allow Windows to update your computer. Otherwise you will forget to do so at a critical time.

Keep my computer up to date . . .

Select whichever notification option you prefer

- **Remote**

We won't talk about this, but just make sure the Remote Desktop button is NOT checked. The reason should be obvious.

Allow users to connect remotely to this computer

Close Control Panel

