

HOW TO: Disable the Automatic Desktop Cleanup Feature in Windows XP

This article was previously published under Q320154

Article ID	: 320154
Last Review	: October 26, 2002
Revision	: 1.0

SUMMARY

This step-by-step article describes how to disable the Automatic Desktop Cleanup feature in Windows XP.

Windows XP includes the Desktop Cleanup Wizard, which keeps track of your usage of the icons on your desktop and periodically offers to remove the icons you have not recently used. Some of the icons are on the desktop because you created them to provide a shortcut method of opening a program or document. Some icons may be on the desktop because a software installation program placed them there.

The Desktop Cleanup Wizard runs every 60 days. It checks the last accessed date of the desktop shortcuts and displays a list of all the icons, with a check mark next to the name of each icon that has not been used in 60 days. You can deselect any icon you want to keep on the desktop, and the Wizard removes the selected icons.

The icons are not deleted, they are moved to a folder and you can put them back on the desktop if you want. The folder that is automatically created the first time the Wizard removes icons is C:\Documents and Settings\UserName\Desktop\Unused Desktop Shortcuts.

NOTE: Windows XP puts a shortcut to this folder on the desktop.

Disable the Automatic Desktop Cleanup Feature

To stop the wizard from automatically running every 60 days:

1. Right-click a blank spot on the desktop, and then click **Properties** to open the **Display Properties** dialog box.
2. Click the **Desktop** tab.
3. Click **Customize desktop** to open the **Desktop Items** dialog box.
4. Click to clear the **Run Desktop Cleanup Wizard every 60 days** check box.
5. Click **OK** twice to close the dialog boxes.

To run the Wizard manually, click **Clean Desktop Now** on the **Desktop Items** dialog box. You can perform a manual cleanup at any time, even if you have not disabled the wizard.

APPLIES TO

- Microsoft Windows XP Professional
- Microsoft Windows XP Home Edition

© 2006 Microsoft Corporation. All rights reserved.