

How to create a custom default user profile

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SUMMARY

This article describes how to create a custom default user profile in Windows XP. A custom default user profile is helpful if several people use the same computer but each user wants a separate profile and access to shared resources. When multiple users log on locally to the same computer, Windows XP uses the built-in default user profile as a template to assign a profile to each new user. You can replace this built-in profile with a custom default user profile so that each new user receives a custom version of the profile.

Because this change is permanent, it is a good idea to make a backup copy of the default user profile, in case you ever want to use it again. The default user profile is in the Default User folder under **Documents and Settings**.

Create a custom default user profile

1. Log on to the computer as the administrator, and then create a local user account.
2. Log off as the administrator, and then log on to the computer through the local user account that you just created.

Caution You will cause permissions issues if you create the custom user profile when you are logged on as the administrator.

3. Customize the profile appropriately. For example, install printers and map the drives that you need.
4. Log off as the local user, and then log back on as the administrator.
5. Because several of the files in the profile are hidden and must be copied to the new custom default user profile, turn on the **Show hidden files and folders** option. To do so, follow these steps:
 - a. Double-click **My Computer**, click **Tools**, and then click **Folder Options**.
 - b. On the **View** tab, under **Advanced settings**, click **Show hidden files and folders**, and then click **OK**.
6. Replace the current default user profile with the customized default user profile. To do so, follow these steps:
 - a. In Control Panel, double-click **System**.
 - b. In the **System Properties** dialog box, click the **Advanced** tab.
 - c. Under **User Profiles**, click **Settings**.
 - d. In the **User Profiles** dialog box, click the user profile that you just created, and then click **Copy To**.
 - e. In the **Copy To** dialog box, under **Copy profile to**, click **Browse**, click the **C:\Documents and Settings\Default User** folder, and then click **OK**.
 - f. Under **Permitted to use**, click **Change**, click **Everyone**, and then click **OK**. If **Everyone** is not available, click **Advanced**, click **Find Now**, click **Everyone**, and then click **OK**.

Windows XP will now assign the custom default user profile to any new user who logs on to the computer.

Note: You can use this custom profile on other Windows XP-based computers by copying the profile you saved in **C:\Documents and Settings\Default User** to the same folder on a different computer.

APPLIES TO

- Microsoft Windows XP Professional
- Microsoft Windows XP Home Edition
- Microsoft Windows XP Professional 64-Bit Edition (Itanium)
- Microsoft Windows XP Tablet PC Edition
- Microsoft Windows XP Media Center Edition 2002