Welcome to iolo System Mechanic Help

Getting to know System Mechanic

- License agreement
- What is System Mechanic and what does it do?
- A word of warning before using System Mechanic

Quick Help Topics

- Working with System Mechanic's Interface
- How to purchase System Mechanic
- How to upgrade your copy of System Mechanic
- System Mechanic, System Mechanic Professional, and System Mechanic Mobile Toolkit
- More details about System Mechanic Mobile Toolkit Edition
- How to obtain technical support

What System Mechanic does for you…

Clean your system

- Cleaning your system of junk and obsolete files
- Removing duplicate files
- Ensuring your privacy
- Blocking popup windows and online advertising
- Uninstalling software applications

Fix your system

- Fixing, cleaning and optimizing the system registry
- Fixing and removing invalid Windows shortcuts
- Removing invalid uninstaller information
- Recovering deleted data *

Maintain your system

- Performing maintenance using the Maintenance Wizard
- Using the Scheduled Maintenance tool
- Activating and Using the Utility Bar
- Relocating Software Applications

Optimize your system

- Optimizing your Internet and network speed
- Managing startup applications
- Customizing Windows settings
- Defragmenting and speeding up hard drives
- Recovering and defragmenting memory

Protect your system

- Securely deleting files and folders
- Tracking system changes with System Snapshots

- Removing spyware and malware parasites
- Protecting against viruses *
- Defending against hackers and Internet threats *
- Securely cleaning your hard drives using DriveScrubber *
- Securely erasing deleted files using System Shield *

Set System Mechanic options

- Configuring System Mechanic options
- Automatically updating System Mechanic using the Internet
- Viewing tool action logs

Other Information

- How to work with multi-selectable lists
- Tips for successfully entering System Mechanic's license information
- I need more help!

* **Note:** Items marked with an asterisk are included exclusively in **System Mechanic Professional**

How to work with multi-selectable lists

Many of System Mechanic's utilities provide lists of items that you can view and select. Utilities like the **Junk and Obsolete File Removal** tool and the **Registry Cleaner and Optimizer** tool display a list of items at the bottom of the screen. Note that the Duplicate File Removal tool does not allow multiple items to be selected for safety reasons.

Here are some helpful tips for working with lists and selecting items within them:

To select items in a list

Hold down the **Ctrl** key on your keyboard while selecting each item.

To select a block of items in a list:

1. Select the first item in the set of items.
2. While holding down the **Shift** key on your keyboard, select the last item in the set.

   Both the first and the last item, as well as all items in between, are highlighted.

   Any command that you select will be applied to all the highlighted items.

You may also select a block of items by holding down the mouse button and dragging a rectangle around the items.

To select all items in a list:

1. Select a single item in the list.
2. Hold down the **Ctrl** key and press the letter **A** on your keyboard.

   All items in the list are selected.

Other shortcuts in System Mechanic

The following keyboard shortcuts make operations in System Mechanic easier:

Del: Perform the selected removal option on all selected items.
Enter: Perform the default "inspection" action (for example, view the selected item in Windows QuickView).
Ctrl+Enter: Perform the alternate "inspection" action (for example, access the selected item's properties).

Note: An efficient method of discovering embedded shortcuts is to right-click in an area of the System Mechanic interface. All available keyboard shortcuts are displayed to the right of each menu item.

Return to System Mechanic Help Topics

A word of warning before using System Mechanic

Basic prudence should be observed and exercised when using system utility software:

Before manipulating any important data it is strongly advised that you have a current backup.

System Mechanic interacts with intricate parts of your computer and may encounter unexpected configurations, incompatibilities, or indiscriminate/pre-existing system corruption. iolo Technologies has researched and tested System Mechanic extensively with regards to compatibility and safety, however there may be instances where its tools will fail or lead to a loss or corruption of data. This behavior has never been encountered in our testing, but we cannot guarantee that it will not happen.

Please read, understand, and accept the System Mechanic license agreement before using this product.

If you cannot accept the terms in the license agreement, please do not use this software.

Return to System Mechanic Help Topics

How to purchase System Mechanic

We've put together some information to make it easy for you to purchase a licensed copy of this product or to upgrade your existing license in a fast and convenient manner. We hope that System Mechanic proves itself to be a valuable addition to your set of system tools.

{button Click here to purchase over the Internet using a credit card,EF(`http://www.iolo.com/purchase.cfm',`',5,`')}

What do I get if I purchase?

- Free, unlimited access to telephone, email, web and fax-based technical support.
- Free Updates to minor releases (to v1.1, 1.2, etc) and all service releases and fixes.
- Notifications about, and generous discounts on, all new major version upgrades (2.0 to 3.0, etc.)
- Great software created by people dedicated to providing quality products to people like you!

How much does it cost?

- Single computer installation of System Mechanic: **$49.95** (upgrade discounts apply to licensed owners of previous versions)
- Single computer installation of System Mechanic Professional: **$69.95** (upgrade discounts apply to licensed owners of previous versions)
- For more than four copies, contact iolo for special upgrade and site license pricing.
- Mobile Toolkit Edition: **$299.95** (Click here for more details)

Please note that prices and availability are subject to change without notice.

How do I upgrade?

How do I license System Mechanic for more than one computer?

How do I order?

Instant and secure web-based ordering using a credit card

{button Click here to order online now,EF(`http://www.iolo.com/order',`',5,`')}

Toll-free by telephone

From the US: 1-877-239-IOLO (8:00 AM - 5:00 PM, Mon-Fri, Pacific Time)

Non-US orders: 1-323-257-8888

By mail or fax

You may fax or mail your order to us. Your product is delivered when payment is received.

Fax: 1-323-257-8885

Mailing address:

iolo technologies, LLC
Attn: System Mechanic Orders
7470 N. Figueroa St.
Los Angeles, CA 90041

Can I use a purchase order?

In qualifying circumstances (i.e. applicable volume or corporate orders), purchase orders are accepted. Please **contact iolo** for more details.

Can I pay by bank transfer?

Yes, bank transfers are accepted for amounts over $100. Please contact iolo technologies at 1-323-257-8888 or http://www.iolo.com/contactus.cfm for our incoming payment bank details.

Reseller Inquires

We are always looking for interested resellers for our products. If you are interested in reselling System Mechanic or any other *iolo technologies* product, please **contact iolo** for more details.

Attention: resellers, consultants, VARs and MIS/IT managers

System Mechanic is available in a Mobile Toolkit edition which is specially made for your line of work. Click here for details!

Return to System Mechanic Help Topics

System Mechanic Order Form

You may use this order form for faxing or mailing orders for System Mechanic. To print this form, select **Print Topic** in the File menu. Fax to: 1-323-257-8885 or call iolo toll free at 1-877-239-IOLO (US) or 1-323-257-8888 (non US). If you need to upgrade your existing license, click here.

All relevant information below is required to process your order.

Company Name: _____

Your Name: _____

Phone Number: _____ FAX Number: _____

Email Address (**please verify!**): _____

Address: _____

City: _____ State/County: _____

Where did you obtain System Mechanic? _____

Please specify which versions of System Mechanic you would like to order:

[_____] Copies of **System Mechanic** at $49.95 per copy. For more than 4 copies, contact iolo for special upgrade and site license pricing.

[_____] Copies of **System Mechanic Professional** at $69.95 per copy. For more than 4 copies, contact iolo for special upgrade and site license pricing.

[_____] Copies of **System Mechanic Mobile Toolkit Edition** at $299.95 for one CD-ROM and $99.95 for each additional CD-ROM.

Delivery method

[__] Emailed invoice with User ID and serial number: **FREE** (not available for Mobile Toolkit Edition)

[__] Postal delivery: $10.00 for US orders, $15.00 all others. Please allow *up to* 10 days for US and 20 days for all others.

I would like to pay using:

[__] MasterCard/Eurocard

[__] Visa

[__] American Express

Name on Card: _____

Credit Card Number: _____ Exp: _____

[__] I am enclosing a check or money order paid in US Dollars, drawn on a US Bank, and payable to **iolo technologies, LLC.**

Please FAX to 1-323-257-8885. Or mail to iolo technologies, 7470 N. Figueroa St., Los Angeles, CA 90041

There is a $20.00 processing fee for company purchase orders under $100.00 requesting net payment terms. Checks or money orders must be paid in US dollars and drawn on a US bank. Orders are processed Monday through Friday, excluding US holidays. Please allow 24 hours for order processing. **Prices and availability are subject to change without notice.**

Return to System Mechanic Help Topics

Upgrading your System Mechanic license

Minor updates (i.e. version 3.1 to version 3.2) are available through System Mechanic's **WebUpdate** function and are offered at no charge.

Upgrades between major versions of the product (i.e. version 3 to version 4) are made available at special discount price rates for existing licensed users. For more information on how to obtain special discount upgrade pricing, visit iolo's website at http://www.iolo.com or contact us directly.

For more than 4 copies, contact iolo for special upgrade and site license pricing.

Return to System Mechanic Help Topics

Licensing System Mechanic for more than one computer

System Mechanic is licensed on a "per-computer" basis. This means that you must purchase a license for each separate computer that it will be installed or used on, regardless of the number of people using each computer. Licenses are only sold in the blocks designated below. If you require a number of licenses that is not defined specifically in the blocks below, you should combine smaller blocks to arrive at an appropriate number of licenses (for example, 200 licenses would require two 100-license blocks). Licenses for any less than five PCs are sold at single-user prices. If you require assistance before making a decision on a multi-computer license, please do not hesitate to contact us.

Multi-computer pricing matrix

Number of computers	**System Mechanic**	**System Mechanic Professional**
1-4	$49.95 each	$69.95 each
4 or more licenses	Contact iolo for special upgrade and site license pricing.	

Mobile Toolkit Edition

- $299.95 for first CD
- $99.00 for each additional CD

Click here to purchase now using secure online ordering
Click here for other payment options

Click here for multi-computer upgrade pricing

Attention: Consultants, VARs, technicians, and MIS/IT managers looking to maintain multiple computers – System Mechanic is available in a Mobile Toolkit edition that provides a portable unlimited license solution. Click here for more details.

Note: Prices and availability are subject to change without notice.

Return to System Mechanic Help Topics

Multi-computer upgrade pricing

Special upgrade and site license pricing is available. For more than 4 copies, contact iolo for special upgrade and site license pricing.

Return to System Mechanic Help Topics

Introduction to System Mechanic

Computers need maintenance.

Computers are more like cars than home appliances, requiring systematic cleaning and servicing just as a vehicle does. And like your car, your computer will begin to run poorly and even "break down" if not maintained. You maintain your car because of the large investment you have in it. You should maintain your computer just as carefully.

Unfortunately, computer maintenance procedures are complex, and maintenance tools are not included with your operating system. **System Mechanic is a complete collection of all of the tools that you can use to keep your system running smooth, fast, and error free.**

System Mechanic's collection of tools provides vital functions not available elsewhere in your operating system. These tools deliver ease of use, power, and flexibility. System Mechanic helps you:

- Get rid of junk files and folders and duplicate files
- Protect your privacy
- Stop popups
- Blocks online advertisements (Internet Explorer, version 5.01 and later)
- Clean your system registry
- Fix or remove broken shortcuts
- Uninstall or relocate software
- Get rid of old uninstaller links in your Add/Remove Programs control panel
- Recover deleted data
- Perform routine PC maintenance using a wizard or an unattended scheduler
- Optimize your Internet performance
- Manage your system startup
- Customize Windows
- Speed up your hard drives
- Manage your memory
- Track system changes
- Remove parasites including spyware, adware, keyboard loggers, and more

System Mechanic Professional also helps you:

- Protect against viruses
- Block Internet threats
- Find and recover deleted files and data on your hard drives and removable media
- Securely scrub your hard drives of sensitive information or deleted files
- Completely erase hard drives so that no data can be recovered

Use System Mechanic regularly and we promise that you will be amazed by how much better your computer runs!

Return to System Mechanic Help Topics

Further assistance

If you require additional assistance in the use of this product, please contact iolo technologies:

On the web: http://www.iolo.com

Technical Support: 323-257-8886
Toll-Free Purchases: 877-239-4656
Non-technical customer Service: 323-257-8888

Please note that telephone service hours are 8AM to 5PM, Monday through Friday, excluding US holidays.

Return to System Mechanic Help Topics

System Mechanic license agreement

Use of System Mechanic for any period of time binds you to this license agreement. Please read and understand it before using the software. If you do not understand or cannot agree to these terms, please discontinue use of the product immediately.

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7470 North Figueroa St.
Los Angeles, CA 90041

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Return to System Mechanic Help Topics

System Mechanic, System Mechanic Professional, and System Mechanic Mobile Toolkit

The *System Mechanic* product family is available as the following separate versions:

System Mechanic: $49.95 per computer
Click here for information on site licenses and multiple-computer discounts

System Mechanic fixes stubborn PC problems, keeps systems running at peak performance, and properly maintains Windows to prevent problems from reoccurring. It contains a complete arsenal of tools such as high-speed disk defragmentation, spyware and malware parasite protection, popup ad blocking, memory defragmentation, registry backup and compression, and more!

Some of the tools available are as follows:

- Find and remove junk and obsolete files
- Clean up, repair, and optimize the system registry
- Speed up your Internet connection up to 300% with NetBooster
- Ensure your privacy, remove cookies, cache, and Internet debris
- Manage the items that are launched when Windows starts
- Find and remove duplicate files and drivers
- Tweak and customize Windows settings
- Find and fix broken Windows shortcuts
- Remove invalid uninstaller links
- Securely delete sensitive files with Incinerator
- Defragment hard drives
- Cleanly and safely uninstall software
- Move programs from one location to another
- Optimize memory usage
- Stop Internet popup windows
- Block advertisements (Internet Explorer, version 5.01 or later)
- Remove parasitic software, including spyware, adware, and key loggers
- Perform routine system maintenance using an easy-to-understand wizard
- Track and report all system changes
- Receive updates automatically over the Internet
- Schedule automatic system maintenance
- Keep comprehensive tool action logs

System Mechanic Professional: $69.95 per computer
Click here for information on site licenses and multiple-computer discounts

A totally integrated suite of powerful PC tools that will keep your system running smooth and error-free. Fix stubborn errors; maintain peak performance; protect against viruses and Internet threats; eliminate spyware; ensure Internet security; recover deleted files and email; and more! Six award-winning products make up one authoritative solution.

In addition to the features provided in System Mechanic, **System Mechanic Professional** lets you:

- Automatically block viruses and disinfect or quarantine infected files
- Protect your PC against attacks from Internet and Network hack attempts using a robust firewall
- Find and recover files and data that has been deleted from your hard drives or removable media
- Thoroughly erase all traces of data from a hard drive
- Clean deleted file data so it cannot be recovered

System Mechanic Mobile Toolkit Edition: $299.95 for the first CD and $99.95 for each additional CD.
Intended for use by IT/MIS personnel, consultants, and VARs, System Mechanic Mobile Toolkit includes all of the powerful tools in **System Mechanic Professional**, but runs directly from CDROM with no installation required and no remnant executable files left behind. This allows **System Mechanic Mobile Toolkit** to be easily transported and used on any number of computers by

simply inserting the CD into each machine, performing the maintenance required, and then removing the CD afterward. System Mechanic Mobile Toolkit can also be utilized in a shared network CDROM environment, and a technician can perform system maintenance on any PC that has access to this shared location.

Click here for more details about what is included with System Mechanic's Mobile Toolkit Edition.

{button Click here to purchase or upgrade over the Internet using a credit card.,EF("http://www.iolo.com/order","",0)}

{button Print an order form,JI(`SYSMECH.HLP',`System_Mechanic_Order_Form')}

For information about how to order System Mechanic click here.

All prices are in US dollars.
Prices and availability subject to change without notice.

Return to System Mechanic Help Topics

Cleaning your system of junk and obsolete files

Junk and Obsolete File Removal Help Topics

Return to System Mechanic Help Topics

Junk and Obsolete Files: Including and excluding folders from the file scan

Including all files within certain folders during a scan

Adding folders to be included

There may be times when you wish to scan all of the files within a certain folder. To do this:

1. Select the button labeled **Get Rid of Junk Files** on the **Clean** tab.
2. Select the Folders tab in the window that appears, and then select the **Inclusions** sub-tab.
3. Select the button labeled **Add Folder**.
4. Use the Select Directory dialog box that appears to navigate to the desired folder, and then select the button labeled **OK**.
5. Enter a brief reminder about the purpose of this folder in the Folder Description dialog box that appears.

   Your new folder location appears in the box labeled **Find all files in these folders…**. All files in this folder and all subfolders within it will be included when you perform a scan.

Editing existing folder information

If you would like to edit any of the information for an folder entry listed under **Find all files in these folders**:

1. Select the folder entry you would like to edit.
2. Select the button labeled **Edit**.
3. If you wish to change the folder location, browse for the new folder location.
4. Modify the description for the selected folder.

Disabling and removing listed folders

To temporarily exclude a listed folder from being included during a scan, "uncheck" its corresponding box (located to the left of the folder entry). This folder will not be included in file scans as long as its box is not checked.

To permanently remove a listed folder from being included during a scan, select the folder entry and then select the button labeled **Remove**.

Excluding all files within certain folders during a scan

Adding folders to be excluded

There may be times when you do not wish to scan any files contained within a specific folder. (For example, you may be using an application that makes legitimate use of zero-length files, or uses one of the Windows standard temporary file extensions as a valid associated file.) You can instruct the file scanning process to ignore any files found within specified folder locations:

1. Select the button labeled **Get Rid of Junk Files** on the **Clean** tab.
2. Select the Folders tab in the window that appears, and then select the **Exclusions** sub-tab.
3. Select the button labeled **Add Folder**.
4. Use the Select Directory dialog box that appears to navigate to the desired folder, and then select the button labeled **OK**.
5. Enter a brief reminder about the purpose of this folder in the Folder Description dialog box that appears.

   Your new folder location appears in the box labeled **Exclude all of the files in these folders**. All files in this folder and all subfolders within it will be excluded when you perform a scan.

Editing existing folder information

To edit any of the information for an folder entry listed under **Exclude all of the files in these folders**:

1. Select the folder entry you would like to edit
2. Select the button labeled **Edit**.
3. If you wish to change the folder location, browse for the new folder location.
4. Modify the description for the selected folder.

Disabling and removing listed folders

To temporarily exclude a listed folder from being excluded during a scan, "uncheck" its corresponding box (located to the left of the folder entry). This folder will be included in file scans so long as its box is not checked.

To permanently remove a listed folder from being excluded during a scan:

1. Select the folder entry.
2. Select the button labeled **Remove**.

Return to Junk and Obsolete File Help Topics
Return to System Mechanic Help Topics

Junk and Obsolete Files: Introduction

Most Windows applications temporarily create files on your hard drive when they are running. These files are supposed to be removed and the space recovered after these programs are closed. Often, however, the temporary files are not removed because of a program error or careless architecture, because your system was reset or not shut down properly, or because another application has stopped responding or crashed. Any file that is left behind in this manner will remain on your system unless you manually search for it and remove it. Over time, these junk and obsolete files can accumulate to a combined total of several megabytes and even gigabytes of hard drive space, and may also turn into potential error-producing cross-linked drive references. In addition to wasting space on your system, obsolete and junk files have the potential to produce very hazardous results if not properly cleaned from your drive on a periodic basis.

System Mechanic targets these specific types of files, ensuring that all junk files are removed from your system.

The symptoms that garbage files can produce include:

- Cross-linked drive references
- Lost network and Internet connections
- Sudden application lockups
- Lost data
- General Protection Faults (GPF) or fatal errors in your applications
- Virus-like behavior
- Mysterious reboots
- Out of Memory errors

Return to Junk and Obsolete File Help Topics
Return to System Mechanic Help Topics

Junk and Obsolete Files: When should I use this utility?

Over time, every computer system's hard drive space will seem to shrink, despite no new software being installed. This is almost always a direct result of junk and obsolete file accumulation. It is recommended that you clean your drives of these files at least once every 30 days, or any time that you notice your hard drive space suspiciously dropping.

Click here for more information about automatically scheduling this type of maintenance.

Return to Junk and Obsolete File Help Topics
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Junk and Obsolete Files: Selecting drives to scan

When the Junk and Obsolete File tool is first opened, it displays a list of the drives on your system. If you are running the utility for the first time, it is recommended that you select all drives except floppy and CDROM drives. To select a drive for scanning, check the box next to its corresponding icon.

Return to Junk and Obsolete File Help Topics
Return to System Mechanic Help Topics

Junk and Obsolete Files: Selecting files to scan for

In the **Junk to Find** step in the **Junk and Obsolete Files** tool, you will see a listing of various default file-types that are selected as safe candidates for removal. The file extension is provided in the first column and a description of the file type is specified in the second column. The default file types are explained below:

***.~*, ~*.*, *.*~, *.---, *.tmp, *._mp, *._mp ~.$$$, *.^*, *.??$, *.?~?, *.temp, *.$*, *.@@@**

These files are all standard Windows temporary files. These are the files that are created by applications when they are running, and are supposed to be removed when they close. Most of the time, these types of files are used as virtual memory undo information or application "scratch pads".

***.old, *.bak, *.syd**

These files are backup copies automatically created by installation programs that needed to modify an existing configuration or system file, such as autoexec.bat or config.sys. These files are usually created to provide a way to "roll-back" to your original settings should the new configuration cause problems. If your system is running normally, there is no reason to keep these files.

***.chk**

When you use Windows' Scandisk utility (a built-in tool that checks hard drives for errors) and it finds errors or lost data on your hard drive, you have the option to save this arbitrary information as a raw file with a .chk extension. These files are only necessary if you have lost some type of information and are attempting to find or extract it from your hard drive (a very difficult and expensive process only achievable by highly skilled forensic data engineers). If your system is currently running normally, there is no reason to keep these files if they exist.

***.gid**

When you open a Windows help file and select the **Search** tab, the help system builds a search index with the extension of .gid to allow you to quickly search for keywords in the help system. These index files usually consume a great deal of drive space and can also be automatically re-generated if you ever need to search within the help file again, so there is little reason to keep them resident on your system if you attempting to conserve free space.

mscreate.dir

"mscreate.dir" files are created temporarily in many "common" application folders for indexing purposes. Sometimes these files are left behind and become obsolete when you uninstall or manually remove various files from your system. When these "mscreate.dir" files are created, they are marked as "read-only" (a file that is "read-only" is meant to be accessed and read from, but not moved, modified, or deleted). Although these files are marked as "read-only", they may safely be removed from your system if desired, as they are dynamically re-created when and if an application needs to access them again for indexing purposes.

0???????.nch

When you access Internet newsgroups using programs such as Microsoft's Outlook Express®, much of the information is downloaded locally to your hard drive and stored as "cache" in a file with the extension .nch, enumerated using a set of 9 numbers. Since Internet newsgroup information is most often extremely extensive, this information, when saved to a file, can add up to tens, if not hundreds, of megabytes and even gigabytes of disk space over time. Because Internet newsgroup information is also constantly changing and these files are readily available again for downloading when necessary, it may be a good idea to remove them periodically when drive space conservation is a priority.

***.dmp**

When a critical error occurs in Windows, the operating system may automatically save the contents of memory to disk in order to allow a system administrator (or someone with equivalent knowledge) to analyze the system's state prior to the error. The files that contain this information have the extension ".dmp", and are usually extremely large (ranging from several megabytes up to multiple gigabytes, depending on the state of your system, the amount of memory installed, and the configuration at the time of the error). These files will remain on your system until manually removed, and unless they are needed for analysis purposes, a great deal of space can be preserved by regularly removing them if they exist.

***.err**, **errorlog.txt**, **comsetup.log**, **netsetup.log**, **mpcsetup.log**, **windowsupdate.log**, **directx.log**

A log file is a file that records all actions that a program has performed. The log file can be removed unless it is necessary for analysis purposes. Log files include installation log files and error log files.

***.$db**, ***.db$**

During processing, a database might create temporary files for various reasons. It can be a good idea to remove these files to free space on your drive.

Other default files include:

File extension	File type
imagedb.aid	Temporary installation file
*.mch	Macromedia Xtra cache files
*.ilk	Temporary programming files
vc?0.idb	
*.diz	Zip archive description files
*.xlk	Microsoft Excel backup files
*.nu3	Norton Utilities backup files
*.nu4	
file????._dd	Norton Disk Doctor recovered file
*.ftg	Temporary help search data files
*.dao	Windows registry backup files
*.fnd	Explorer saved search files

How do I know that the files I scan for are safe to remove?

Although we strongly recommend a full system backup before performing any removal operation on your system, you can be fairly certain that the files that this tool finds are completely safe to remove. Years of research and testing have gone into the subject of temporary files and obsolete data stored by Windows operating systems. A list of very reliable file types that may be assumed to be junk or obsolete has been compiled based on this resulting information. The files that this tool looks for are, by their very nature, intended to be removed anyway—yet for some reason were not. There are various additional safety checks and options built into this tool in order to ensure that the files found are not currently being used and have not been accessed recently by any other applications.

Adding new and modifying existing file types

It should be strongly noted that adding to or editing the existing file types may lead to hazardous and/or unexpected results if you are not experienced with such matters. **If you have ANY doubts about your ability to perform such modifications, do not change the default settings in this tool** – iolo technologies cannot be held responsible for any problems that result from the misuse or improper configuration of System Mechanic.

Adding your own file types

If you are experienced with the nature of Windows file types, you may wish to customize the pre-built list of items to search for. Perhaps you own an application that chronically leaves behind junk and obsolete files. If you know the extension or wildcard filter for the types of files you wish to scan for and remove using this tool, you may add them to the saved list of file types using the following procedure:

1. Select the button labeled **Add** on the **Files to Find** tab in the **Junk and Obsolete Files** tool window.
2. In the box labeled **Extension or name of the file you wish to scan for**, enter the filename extension or wildcard filter (for example, ***.tmp**). Select the button labeled **OK**.
3. In the box labeled **Enter a short description for this new file type**, enter a short note to remind you what this file type represents (for example,. "Files left behind by PhotoShop").

Editing existing file types

Be sure you are fully familiar with this type of procedure before engaging in it. To modify an existing file type (changing either its filter information or its description):

1. Select the item that you would like to edit.
2. Select the button labeled **Edit**.
3. In the box labeled **Extension or name of the file you wish to scan for**, you may modify the filename extension or wildcard filter (for example, ***.tmp**). Select the button labeled **OK** (If you do not wish to modify the existing extension of filter, simply select the button labeled **OK** without making any changes.)
4. In the box labeled **Enter a short description for this new file type**, you may modify the short note to remind you what this file type represents (for example, "Files left behind by Widget Creator 3.0").

Disabling or removing existing file types

Temporarily excluding listed file types

If you would like to temporarily exclude one or more of the listed file types from being scanned, simply uncheck its corresponding box located to the left of the file type entry.

Permanently removing listed file types

To permanently remove one or more of the listed file types from all drive scans:

1. Select the item that you would like to remove.
2. Select the button labeled **Remove**.
3. Select the button labeled **Yes** to confirm your selection and complete the removal process.

Restoring the default search criteria list

If at any time you would like to revert back to the original list of search criteria, select the button labeled **Default**.

Note: Invoking this option will abandon any changes that have been made to your existing list of search criteria.

Return to Junk and Obsolete File Help Topics
Return to System Mechanic Help Topics

Junk and Obsolete Files: Other considerations before scanning

The **Advanced** step in the **Junk and Obsolete Files** tool features several additional options that let you flexibly find and remove debris from your system.

Only find files that have not been accessed in X days

Use this option to skip files that have been accessed recently. This provides the cautious user with a method of only finding and removing files that they are sure have not been used in a certain amount of time.

Use the following procedure to activate this option:

1. Check the box labeled **Only find files that have not been accessed in**.
2. Either use the corresponding up and down arrows to increase or decrease the number of days or manually type a number between 0 and 999.

Skip read-only and system files

Windows and other applications sometimes mark files with "read-only" or "system" attributes. These types of attributes usually designate an important and necessary file that should not be removed.

To automatically exclude files with these attributes from any drive searches, check the box labeled **Skip read-only and system files**.

Skip files that are currently being used by their associated application

It is never advised to attempt to remove a file that is currently being used by another application, as it will most likely cause unexpected and/or hazardous results in that application. Although System Mechanic automatically prevents itself from removing files that are in use if an item's name matches the configured search criteria, you may use this option to prevent them from being listed when a scan is performed.

Find unused files in the Windows "Temporary" folder

All Windows systems have a special directory (or set of directories) commonly referred to as the "Temporary Folder" where temporary files and data are stored by applications and the operating system. The files and subfolders contained in this folder are all transitory and may be safely removed.

To consider all files contained in the Windows Temporary Folder as candidates for removal, check the box labeled **Find unused files in the Windows Temporary folder**. Using the **Skip read-only and system files** option in conjunction with this option is an excellent way to identify all files within the temporary folder that are no longer used and can be removed safely.

Find empty temporary subfolders

If this option is enabled, all folders that are located within the main Windows temporary folder will be examined after the temporary folder is cleaned. If any of these folders are found to have no files left within them, they will be reported as candidates for removal.

Find zero-length files

Zero-length files are created when an application creates a new document or other file but does not place any data within it. This can happen when you create a new file but forget to save it, or if an application or your system crashes before your work is saved. These files literally contain no data and can be safely removed, eliminating clutter from your PC.

To enable the option to search for zero-length files, check the box labeled **Find zero-length files**.

Find items in prefetch cache folder

Note that this options is only available under Windows XP or later.

Windows XP and later stores expendable copies of items that it has determined to be used more frequently than others in a special location which speeds up access time. This location is called the "prefetch cache" folder. The prefetch cache folder often contains obsolete or old copies of files, documents, and other Windows elements that take a considerable amount of disk space. Because the items stored in the prefetch cache folder are expendable "copies", it is considered safe to empty it on occasion in order to purge debris that would have remained indefinitely, thus freeing up the occupied disk space and allowing Windows to organize the folder's contents more effectively.

To enable the option to find items in the prefetch cache folder, check the box labeled **Find items in prefetch cache folder**.

Return to Junk and Obsolete File Help Topics
Return to System Mechanic Help Topics

Junk and Obsolete Files: Performing the scan

Once all of the options have been specified, you are ready to begin scanning the selected drives for files that can be removed.

Starting the scan

To start scanning for junk and obsolete files on your system, select the button labeled **Search** from the bottom of the Junk and Obsolete Tool window. During a scan certain visual queues appear notifying you of the active scan process, such as an animated magnifying glass and computer, as well as a progress gauge and the current search folder data.

Aborting an active scan

If during the scanning process you would like to immediately abort (displaying only the files that have been found thus far) select the button labeled **Cancel**.

Note: Some options will not be available during the scan. Stop the scan or wait until it has finished before accessing these options.

Return to Junk and Obsolete File Help Topics
Return to System Mechanic Help Topics

Junk and Obsolete Files: Inspecting and Removing Junk and Obsolete Files

When a scan is complete and all candidates for removal have been found, the **Removal** step will become active, providing a list of junk files and a toolbar to work with them. This toolbar provides a number of functions that allow you to flexibly inspect and remove the displayed files. The buttons and their corresponding actions are described as follows:

Remove

This button can be used in two ways to remove displayed files:

Removing selected files

Once you have selected the files you wish to remove:

1. Select the button labeled **Remove** to invoke the removal options drop down menu.
2. Select the option labeled **Remove Selected Files**.

Note: Junk Files can also be individually removed by selecting them and then pressing the **Del** or **Delete** key on your keyboard.

Removing all files

To remove all listed files:

1. Select the button labeled **Remove** to invoke the removal options drop down menu.
2. Select the option labeled **Remove all listed files**.

QuickView*

Select the button labeled **QuickView** to view the contents of a selected file using the Windows application QuickView, which is installed by default under some version of the Windows operating system. If QuickView is not available, this option will be hidden.

*** Note:** This option is not available on systems running Windows 2000, Millennium, XP, or later.

Tools

To access options related to the inspection of found items, select the button labeled **Tools**. The related options are outlined below.

Properties

Select the option labeled **Properties** to access the Windows standard properties dialog box for the selected file. (Double clicking on a file performs the same action.)

Open Explorer to file location

To open Windows Explorer and display the folder in which the selected item is located, select the option labeled **Open Explorer to file location**.

[Return to Junk and Obsolete File Help Topics]
[Return to System Mechanic Help Topics]

Junk and Obsolete Files: Using the Scheduled Maintenance tool to run this operation automatically

System Mechanic includes a built-in Scheduled Maintenance tool which allows you to automatically schedule the Junk and Obsolete File Removal functions to take place at given intervals. Click here for more information.

Return to Junk and Obsolete File Help Topics
Return to System Mechanic Help Topics

Ensuring your personal or company privacy

Privacy Help Topics

Return to System Mechanic Help Topics

Privacy: Introduction

Use the Personal Privacy tool to maintain your personal privacy. Many things that you do with your computer are tracked and stored, and sometimes exposed to prying eyes over the Internet or through other methods without your knowledge. Such things as the web sites you visit, the files you view and download over the Internet, the applications and files you access on your hard drives, the programs your run, and many other *presumably* private actions are automatically tracked and even distributed to other individuals.

You can ensure your privacy and keep sensitive information secure by regularly eliminating the "tracks" that you leave behind.

When to use this tool

The best time to use this tool is when you are ready to shut down your computer or leave it unattended for some time. The Personal Privacy tool will ensure that no one is able to access or find any personal information that may have been inadvertently stored on your system, discover what programs you have been using, or know where you have been on the Internet.

To start the tool, select the button labeled **Clean Up Your Tracks** on the **Clean** tab in System Mechanic's main interface window.

Return to Privacy Help Topics
Return to System Mechanic Help Topics

Privacy: General options

Under the **Options** step in the Personal Privacy Tool, the **General** tab refers to items in your standard Windows environment that are stored and tracked as you use your computer.

Erase "Find Files or Folders" history

This option will remove the stored list of previous searches located in the Windows **Find** utility, accessed by selecting **Find** or **Search** and then **Files or Folders** from the Windows Start Menu.

Erase "Find Computer" history

This option will remove the stored list of previous searches located in the Windows **Find Computer** utility, accessed by selecting **Find** and then **Computers** in the Windows Start Menu.

Erase "Start -> Run" history

This option will remove the stored list of previous applications that have been run using the Windows command line runner, accessed by selecting **Run** from the Windows Start Menu.

> **Note:** This option removes historical references to files that were started or launched and not the actual files themselves.

Erase "Start -> Documents" history

This option will remove the stored list of previous documents and files that have been accessed. When you run a file directly or within a program, a link to this file is created in the **Documents** group located in the Windows Start Menu.

> **Note:** That this option will only remove historical references and not the actual files that were run.

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Privacy: Internet history options

Under the **Options** step in the Personal Privacy Tool, the **Internet History** tab contains items that relate to browsing the Internet and may be tracked as you visit various sites on the web. These options deal with both Internet Explorer version 3.0 or later and Netscape, version 2.0 or later.

Erase Internet cookie files

A cookie is a file sent to your computer by an Internet site and stored on your hard drive. It stores information about your identity and preferences when visiting the site. Sometimes cookie files can contain private information about the places you have been on the Internet and other personal statistics. Although the original intent of cookies was to speed the process of re-logging on to a web site that you had previously visited, they can also be used for other more dishonorable activities like providing marketing companies with your personal information, demographics, and preferences such as what products you have purchased over the Internet, what sites you regularly visit, what state or country you live in, etc. By using this tool you can periodically remove the stored information in cookie files from your system, ensuring your privacy on the Internet. This option works with Internet Explorer 3.0 or later and Netscape 2.0 or later files.

Related Topics: Managing Cookies

Erase Internet cache information

As you surf the Internet your browser saves various parts of the web pages you view onto your hard drive in order to speed up the loading process next time you access the site. After some time, these files will accumulate and occupy a great deal of space on your system, as well as providing prying eyes with a trail of information as to where you have been on the Internet. Using this tool you can conveniently remove these files, clear the space they occupy and remove the information they expose about your web surfing habits. This option works with Internet Explorer 3.0 or later and Netscape 2.0 or later files.

Erase Recently Typed URL List from Browser

When you type an Internet URL into your browser's window the information is stored so that if you type that same URL at a later date your browser can automatically complete the remainder of the text (or so that you can select this URL from the drop-down box at the top of the browser). Although this behavior is helpful at times, it openly reveals which web sites you have recently visited. Using this tool you can remove this list of recently typed URLs. This option works with Internet Explorer 3.0 or later and Netscape 2.0 or later files.

Erase History Record Files of Visited Web Pages

Each time you visit a web site, whether you type the site's address into your browser or click a link that takes you to another website, the name and location of the site is stored by your web browser locally on your hard drive Although this provides a good way to look back at where you have been on the Internet, it is also extremely revealing as to each and every site you have visited - even if you did not intend to go there. By using this option you can eliminate the "trail of breadcrumbs" left behind by your browsers when you surf the Internet. This option works with Internet Explorer 3.0 or later and Netscape 2.0 or later files.

Note: If you are using **Microsoft Internet Explorer**: When cookies and history files are removed from your system the physical data files are deleted, however the main data file (index.dat) for these items may remain intact until Windows is restarted either by rebooting the computer or restarting in DOS mode and returning to Windows.

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Privacy: Internet Explorer specific options

Under the **Options** step in the Personal Privacy Tool, the **Internet Explorer** tab contains items that relate specifically to Microsoft's Internet Explorer® browser.

Delete Internet cache files when you close Internet Explorer

Select this option if you would like Internet Explorer to automatically erase its Internet cache files each time you close the browser. For more information on Internet Cache, see **Erase Internet Cache Information** here.

Keep records of visited pages for a limited number of days

Use the up and down arrows to select the number days Internet Explorer should save a history of the web pages you visit. If you select 0 days, Internet Explorer will erase all cache information that is more than 24 hours old each time it is closed.

Return to Privacy Help Topics
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Privacy: America Online Options

America Online® often saves information that you access while online in locally stored cache files. These files can reveal your patterns of online use as well as many other things about the way you use this service.

Erase America Online cache files

This option will search for and remove any cache files that are stored in your America Online folder.

Erase America Online recently typed keyword list

This option will remove the list of recently typed keywords and addressed stored by America Online.

Return to Privacy Help Topics
Return to System Mechanic Help Topics

Privacy: Performing the operation

To begin the Ensure Personal Privacy tool's cleaning operation, select the button labeled **Clean** from the **Options** step within the tool. When you select this button the tool will proceed to perform the cleaning and purging functions that have been configured. A status gauge and text will update to show the progress of the operation. The entire procedure should not take more than a few minutes, and usually takes less than 30 seconds, depending on the amount of debris and information that is being removed.

Note: If you are using **Microsoft Internet Explorer**: When cookies and history files are removed from your system the physical data storage files are deleted, however, the main data index file (index.dat) for these items may remain intact until Windows is restarted (either by rebooting the computer or restarting in DOS mode and returning to Windows).

Return to Privacy Help Topics
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Privacy: Using the Scheduled Maintenance tool to run this operation automatically

System Mechanic contains a built-in **Scheduled Maintenance** tool which allows you to automatically schedule the Ensure Privacy Tool's functions to take place at given intervals. Click here for more information.

Return to Privacy Help Topics
Return to System Mechanic Help Topics

Fixing and removing invalid Windows shortcuts

Fixing or removing invalid shortcut icons Help Topics

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Fixing Shortcuts: Introduction

The Windows operating system provides an excellent feature called **shortcuts**. Shortcuts are separate "links" to files and documents stored in other places on your system. Your Windows Start Menu is comprised of shortcuts pointing to various files elsewhere on your hard drives. Double clicking (or otherwise invoking) a shortcut automatically opens its corresponding application or document. Sometimes, the "targets" of these shortcuts are moved or deleted, leaving the shortcut pointing to a file or location that no longer exists. These orphaned shortcuts can be confusing when they don't operate properly and can clutter your system as unnecessary or defunct debris. System Mechanic provides you with a convenient way to deal with these orphaned files by **scanning your system** for them, and then optionally looking for the files to which they are **supposed to link**. If the previously linked file still exists on your system, you can automatically update the shortcut with the new information, or, you can choose to permanently remove broken shortcuts that are no longer necessary.

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Fixing Shortcuts: Where to look for invalid shortcuts

Selecting Drives to Scan

When the **Fix Broken Shortcuts** tool is loaded, you are presented with a list of drives located on your computer. Check the boxes that correspond to the drive(s) you would like to search for broken shortcuts within.

When you have selected the drives to search within, select the button labeled **Next**.

Searching Options

Under the Options step of the Fix Broken Shortcuts tool, the following configurations can be made to adjust the way this tool searches for broken shortcuts:

- **Automatically scan for moved shortcut targets option**
  To automatically scan your drives for the files that are referenced by the invalid shortcuts, check the box labeled **Automatically scan for moved shortcut targets**. This will automatically populate the column labeled **Possible new target location** on the lower area of the screen when you are scanning.

- **Exclude shortcuts with targets referring to CDROM or network drives**
  Sometimes you system will contain shortcuts that refer to files contained on CDROM discs or network drives that are not currently available, but still valid. An application that requires its CD to be inserted before running is a good example of this. Shortcuts like these should be skipped by System Mechanic for reliability purposes.

- **Limiting the scan to your Start Menu**
  To scan your Start Menu for orphaned links, select the checkbox labeled **Only scan Start Menu**.

  To remove any Start Menu groups that are empty after the cleaning invalid shortcuts, select the checkbox labeled **Remove empty Start Menu groups after cleaning**.

When you have finished configuring the searching options, select the button labeled **Next** to begin the search. See Inspecting, Fixing, and Removing Shortcuts.

Return to Fixing Shortcuts Help Topics
Return to System Mechanic Help Topics

Fixing Shortcuts: Inspecting, fixing, and removing shortcuts

Information Displayed About Shortcuts

Shortcuts that are found to be invalid will be displayed in the lower area of the screen which provides the following information:

Name

This column provides you with the name assigned to the shortcut when it was created.

Target

The target is the file that the shortcut will attempt to launch when it is run.

Location

Location is the physical place on the hard drive where the shortcut file is kept.

Link Description

Link description is the description information that is optionally included with the shortcut when it is created.

Possible new target location

If and when you scan your drives for moved shortcut targets, this column contains the most likely target matches for the displayed invalid shortcuts.

Using the Toolbar to Work With Found Shortcuts

When a scan is complete and any invalid shortcuts located, the fix/remove toolbar will appear above the area which lists those detected invalid shortcuts. This toolbar has a number of functions that enable you to flexibly fix or remove the displayed items. The toolbar buttons and their functions are described below:

Remove

Select the **Remove** button to remove displayed shortcuts and files in accordance to your specified removal options:

Removing selected shortcuts

To select a single shortcut for removal, select it in the file list. To select multiple shortcuts for removal, hold down the **Ctrl** or **Shift** keys while selecting each entry.

Once you have selected the shortcuts you wish to remove:

Select the button labeled **Remove**, or

1. Select the arrow to the right of the button labeled **Remove**.
2. Select the option labeled **Remove Selected Shortcuts**.

Removing all shortcuts

To remove all listed shortcuts:

1. Select the arrow to the right of the button labeled **Remove**.
2. Select the option labeled **Remove all broken shortcuts**.

Manually finding moved targets

If you do not select the option labeled **automatically scan for moved targets** before you scan, you can perform a manual search for the missing targets after the scan is complete. To do this, select the button labeled **Find Targets**.

To browse for the shortcut's original target and re-assign it manually:

1. Select the shortcut for which you would like to search for a target.
2. Select the arrow to the right of the button labeled **Find Targets.**
3. Select the option labeled **Browse for selected shortcut target**.

Fixing Invalid Shortcuts

Once you scan your system (see "Manually finding moved targets" above) and find valid targets for some or all of the displayed

invalid shortcuts, you can optionally update the shortcuts with the new information.

Fixing selected shortcuts

To fix a single selected shortcut, select its entry in the file list. To select multiple shortcuts for removal, hold down the **Ctrl** or **Shift** keys while selecting each entry.

Once you have selected the shortcuts you wish to fix:

Select the button labeled **Fix Shortcuts,** or

1. Select the arrow to the right of the button labeled **Fix Shortcuts**.
2. Select the option labeled **Fix Selected Shortcuts**.

Fixing all shortcuts

To fix all listed shortcuts for which a valid corresponding target has been found:

1. Select the arrow to the right of the button labeled **Fix Shortcuts**.
2. Select the option labeled **Fix all shortcuts**.

Note: Some or all of these options are accessible by right clicking in the displayed shortcuts area.

Return to Fixing Shortcuts Help Topics
Return to System Mechanic Help Topics

Remove Invalid Add/Remove Links: Introduction

Many applications, when installed, place an entry in the "Add/Remove Programs" applet accessible in your Windows Control Panel. These entries usually reference a physical uninstallation file located somewhere on your system. Sometimes, because of manually deleted applications, untidy uninstallation routines, or system crashes or corruption, the information that these entries reference (either a file or other data) no longer exists and results in an error when the corresponding entry is used in the "Add/Remove Programs" control panel. Sometimes it is very difficult or impossible to remove these orphaned entries manually.

System Mechanic provides you with a tool to easily and automatically scan your system for these invalid entries and then optionally remove their references from the Control Panel.

When you first start this tool it automatically scans for invalid uninstaller entries and lists them in its window.

Return to Remove Invalid Add/Remove Links Help Topics
Return to System Mechanic Help Topics

Finding and removing duplicate files

Warning: This tool is intended to search your system for duplicate files. Not all of the files that are found are candidates for removal. Be sure to carefully scrutinize each set of duplicate files before making the decision to remove any of them. It is **always** recommended that you have a current backup of your system before performing any intensive operations using the Duplicate Files tool.

Finding and Removing Duplicate Files Help Topics

Return to System Mechanic Help Topics

Duplicate Files: Introduction

One of the most common technical support issues with computer software and hardware companies today is this problem of duplicate drivers and system files. Duplicate files are also one of the major causes of diminishing hard drive space.

Duplicate files can begin appearing in your system for a number of reasons, and can have a number of detrimental results in addition to wasting your drive space. Various applications may install the same driver files, DLL files, and OCX files (ActiveX controls) in numerous different locations on your system, or you may copy or download the same files into different folders on your system without knowing it. Sometimes the only result of this is wasted hard drive space, but many times, if there are a number of different copies of the same driver or other vital system file, your system can become confused as to which file to use and may even crash or lock up sporadically causing loss of data or other disastrous results.

Using System Mechanic you can easily find and remove duplicates of the same file before they wreak havoc with your system.

Return to Duplicate File Help Topics
Return to System Mechanic Help Topics

Duplicate Files: Selecting drives to scan

The first step to perform before scanning for duplicates is to decide which hard drives you would like to consider possible areas where duplicate files may exist. Start by checking the boxes next to the corresponding drives listed in the **Select Drives** tab. It is recommended that you uncheck any CDROM, network, and floppy drives.

Return to Duplicate File Help Topics
Return to System Mechanic Help Topics

Duplicate Files: Files to Find Step

After selecting the drives to scan, the next step to beginning a scan for duplicate files is to select what types of files you wish to consider for duplicate matches.

Files To Look At Tab
Folders To Scan Tab

Files to Look At Tab

All files

By default, this tool looks at all files on the selected drives, however, you can restrict this to certain files and or file types by using the file filtering system provided on the **Files to Find** tab.

Restricting your search to specified files

To restrict the search for duplicates to certain files and file types, start by selecting the button labeled **Files Named** on the **Files to Find** tab. Selecting this option will reveal a list of default file filters which have been found to either be the most commonly found types of duplicate files, or are known to cause the most serious system problems if duplicate copies exist on your system. The list of default file types is described below:

Executables

Executables (files with a **.exe** extension) are applications that you run (for example, System Mechanic, Notepad, or Calculator). Often, it is necessary and desirable to only have one copy of a specific executable on your system to prevent confusion.

Dynamic Link Libraries

Dynamic Link Libraries (DLL) files have a ".dll" extension and contain functions and other vital information which Windows itself, as well as other programs, access and use. Some very hazardous results can occur if there are multiple copies of the same DLLs with different versions on your system, especially if more than one file is accessible in the Windows search path (the folders that Windows automatically looks for files in). It is highly recommended that any duplicate DLLs are sorted out of your system in order to ensure reliability.

ActiveX Controls

ActiveX controls are very similar to DLLs (see above) and carry the same risk of hazardous results if multiple copies exist on your system.

Text Files

Text files store text-based information and are usually created with a simply text-editor such as Windows Notepad™. Many times these files are inadvertently copied to multiple locations on your hard drive during backups or other file transport procedures. It is usually a good idea to keep only one "live" copy of any document on your system for organizational purposes.

Documents

Documents with the ".doc" extension are created by word processors such as Microsoft Word™. It is usually a good idea to make sure that only one "live" copy of a document is on your system for organizational purposes.

Web Documents

Files with the ".htm" or ".html" extensions are Hypertext Markup Language (HTML) files which are read by your web browser as web pages. Sometimes multiple copies of the same page are stored on your system when you visit a web site more than once.

Picture Files

Files with the ".bmp", ".jpg" , ".jpeg" or ".gif" extensions are picture files. Many times picture files occupy a great deal of space, making it desirable to remove duplicate copies of the same picture file from your system in order to conserve storage space.

Adding new and modifying existing file types

Important note: Adding to or editing the existing file types can lead to damaging results if you are not experienced with such matters. If you have **ANY** doubts about your ability to perform such modifications, **do not make modifications – iolo Technologies, LLC cannot be held responsible for any problems that misuse of these functions may cause**.

Adding new file types

If you are experienced with windows file types, you might want to customize the pre-built list. To add new file extensions and wildcard filters to the saved list of file types:

1. On the **Files to Find** tab, click **Files Named**.
2. Click **Add.**
   The **Add a New File Name** dialog box appears.
3. Do one of the following:
   - § In the **Filename** box, type a file name, including the path where the file is located, for example *C:/Files/Old*.
   - § Next to the **Filename** box, click the **Browse** button; search for and locate and select the file; and then click **OK**.
4. In the **Description** box, type a description, for example *PhotoShop Picture Files*.
6. Click **OK.**
   The file appears in the file list, and the check box next to it is selected.

Editing existing file types

Again, be sure you are fully familiar with this type of procedure/action before engaging in it. To modify an existing displayed file type (either its filter information or its description):

1. Select the button labeled **Files Named** on the **Files to Find** tab.
2. Select the item that you would like to edit.
3. Select the button labeled **Edit**. A dialog box will appear with the information pertaining to the selected entry.
4. In the field labeled **Extension or name of the file you wish to scan for:**, you may modify the filename extension or wildcard filter (for example, ***.pst**).
5. Select the button labeled **OK**.
6. A dialog box with a field labeled **Enter a short description for this new file type:** will appear. In the corresponding field, you may modify the existing short note to remind you what this file type represents (for example, "PhotoShop Picture Files").
7. Select the button labeled **OK.**

Disabling or removing existing file types

Temporarily excluding listed file types

If you would like to temporarily exclude one or more of the listed file types from being scanned you may simply "uncheck" its corresponding box located to the left of the listed entry.

Permanently removing listed file types

To permanently remove one or more of the listed file types from all drive scans:

1. Select the button labeled **Files Named** on the **Files to Find** tab.
2. Select the item that you would like to remove in the list that appears.
3. Select the button labeled **Remove**. A dialog box will appear confirming your decision for permanent removal.
4. Select the button labeled **Yes** to complete the removal process.

Folders To Scan Tab

After you have chosen which file types you would like to look for, you'll need to specify within which folders you would like to run the search.

All folders

By default, all folders on the selected drives are scanned, however, you can restrict this to certain folders and or folder names by using the folder filtering system provided on the **Folders to scan** tab.

Restricting your search to specified folders

Some folders are more prone to containing duplicate than others. The main Windows folders (e.g. "c:\windows\" and "c:\windows\system\") are likely to be the most important folders to be free of duplicate files, yet are two of the most common locations where duplicate files manifest themselves and produce hazardous results. To restrict the search for duplicates to certain folders, start by selecting the button labeled **Folders Named** on the **Folders** tab. Selecting this button will allow you to set up a list of one or more folders in which you suspect duplicate files exist, and then restrict your scan to those folders only.

Adding new folder names

To add a folder in which to scan for duplicate files:

1. Select the button labeled **Folders Named** on the **Folders** tab.
2. Select the button labeled **Add**.
3. In the window that appears, browse for the folder you would like to add and select it.
4. Select the button labeled **OK**.
5. A dialog box with a field labeled **Enter a short description for this folder:** will appear. In the corresponding field, type a short note to remind you what this folder location represents.
6. Select the button labeled **OK**.

Editing existing folder names

To modify an existing displayed folder name (either its location or its description):

1. Select the button labeled **Folders Named** on the **Folders** tab.
2. Select the item that you would like to edit in the list that appears.
3. Select the button labeled **Edit**. A dialog box will appear with the information pertaining to the selected entry.
4. If you would like to edit the existing folder location, browse for the folder you would like to add and select it.
5. Select the button labeled **OK**.
6. A dialog box with a field labeled **Enter a short description for this folder:** will appear. In the corresponding field, type a short note to remind you what this folder location represents.
7. Select the button labeled **OK**.

Disabling or removing existing folder locations

Temporarily excluding listed folder locations

If you would like to temporarily exclude one or more of the listed folder locations from being considered during the scan you may simply "uncheck" its corresponding box located to the left of the listed entry.

Permanently removing listed folder locations

To permanently remove one of the folder locations from consideration:

1. Select the item that you would like to remove.
5. Select the button labeled **Remove**. A dialog box will appear confirming your decision for permanent removal.
6. Select the button labeled **Yes** to complete the removal process.

Return to Duplicate File Help Topics
Return to System Mechanic Help Topics

Duplicate Files: Exclusions Step

There may be situations where you know about certain files or folders which are or contain duplicate files that are intentional valid copies of the same file. You can exclude these files and folders from duplicate file searches in order to better organize the removal process using the following options.

Adding and modifying excluded folder locations

Adding excluded folder names

To exclude a folder that is not currently displayed within the Excluded Folders list:

1. Select the **Folders** tab provided on the **Exclusions** tab.
2. Select the button labeled **Add Folder**.
3. In the window named **Select Directory**, browse for the folder you would like to exclude and select it.
4. Select the button labeled **OK**.
5. A dialog box with a field labeled **Enter a short description for this folder:** will appear. In the corresponding field, type a short note to remind you what this folder location represents.
6. Select the button labeled **OK**.

Editing existing excluded folder names

To modify an existing displayed folder name (either its location or its description):

1. Select the **Folders** tab provided on the **Exclusions** tab.
2. Select the item that you would like to edit in the list that appears.
3. Select the button labeled **Edit** on the **Folders** tab. A dialog box will appear with the information pertaining to the selected entry.
4. If you would like to edit the existing folder location, browse for the folder you would like to exclude and select it.
5. Select the button labeled **OK**.
6. A dialog box with a field labeled **Enter a short description for this folder:** will appear. In the corresponding field, type a short note to remind you what this folder location represents.
7. Select the button labeled **OK**.

Disabling or removing existing excluded folder locations

Temporarily disabling listed excluded folder locations

If you would like to temporarily disable one or more of the listed excluded folder locations from being considered during the scan you may simply "uncheck" its corresponding box located to the left of the listed entry.

Permanently removing listed excluded folder locations

If you decide that you would like to permanently remove one of the excluded folder locations from consideration you may do so in the following manner:

1. Select the **Folders** tab provided on the **Exclusions** tab.
2. Select the item that you would like to edit in the list that appears.
3. Select the button labeled **Remove**. A dialog box will appear confirming your decision for permanent removal.
4. Select the button labeled **Yes** to complete the removal process.

Adding and modifying excluded file names

Adding new file types to exclude

You may add new file extensions and wildcard filters to exclude from the search in the following manner:

1. Select the **Files** tab provided on the **Exclusions** tab.
2. Select the button labeled **Add File**. (If a hint window appears you may read it and select **OK** to close it).
3. In the box labeled **Extension or name of the file you wish to scan for:**, type the filename extension or wildcard filter (for example, ***.pst**).
4. Select the button labeled **OK**.
5. A dialog box with a field labeled **Enter a short description for this new file type:** will appear. In the corresponding field, type a short note to remind you what this file type represents (for example, "PhotoShop Picture Files").

6. Select the button labeled **OK**.

Editing existing file types

To modify an existing displayed excluded file type (either its filter information or its description):

1. Select the **Files** tab provided on the **Exclusions** tab.
2. Select the item that you would like to edit in the list that appears.
3. Select the button labeled **Edit** on the **Exclusions** tab. A dialog box will appear with the information pertaining to the selected entry.
4. In the field labeled **Extension or name of the file you wish to scan for:**, you may modify the filename extension or wildcard filter (for example, ***.pst**).
5. Select the button labeled **OK**.
6. A dialog box with a field labeled **Enter a short description for this new file type:** will appear. In the corresponding field, you may modify the existing short note to remind you what this file type represents (for example, "PhotoShop Picture Files").
7. Select the button labeled **OK**.

Disabling or removing existing excluded file names

Temporarily disabling listed excluded file types

If you would like to temporarily disable one or more of the listed excluded file types from being considered you may simply "uncheck" its corresponding field located to the left of the listed entry.

Permanently removing listed excluded file types

To permanently remove one or more of the listed excluded file types from all drive scans:

1. Select the **Files** tab provided on the **Exclusions** tab.
2. Select the item that you would like to remove in the list that appears.
3. Select the button labeled **Remove** on the **Exclusions** tab. A dialog box will appear confirming your decision for permanent removal.
4. Select the button labeled **Yes** to complete the removal process.

Return to Duplicate File Help Topics
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Duplicate Files: Advanced Options Step

The items on the **Advanced** tab let you specify the criteria used to determine whether two files are duplicates. The following options are provided:

Requirements for duplicate matches

Same creation date and time

Two files with the same creation date and time are likely to be duplicates.

Same name

Two files with the same name may be duplicates, but this option should be used with another of the three options if true duplicate matching is needed, since filename alone is not a good indicator of duplicate files. This option alone provides very loose matching, and may not be needed if one or more of the other more stringent options are used. Filenames can however be very useful when searching for multiple versions of the same files (particularly for DLL and OCX files).

Same Size

For true duplicate matching, size is important. This option compares file sizes down to the byte level for extra accuracy. It is very probable that two or more files that are exactly the same size are duplicates of each other.

Advanced Options

Use floppy drive contents as master file list

Use this option if you want to scan for copies of files that you have placed on a floppy disk. This tool will scan the inserted floppy disk for files and then search for the same files on all of the selected drives.

Skip SYSBCKUP folders

The SYSBCKUP folder is a Windows folder that contains backup copies of some vital Windows files and information. This folder will always contain legitimate duplicates of files found elsewhere in your system. Select this option to skip the SYSBCKUP folder.

Skip Windows Virtual Folders

Windows virtual folders are "non-physical" folders that contain indexing information for other data. These folders include the Windows "My Briefcase" folder, and the "Recycle Bin" folder. Since files are not handled in a standard way in these folders, they will never yield valid results. Select this option to skip these folders.

Skip Zero Length Files

If zero length files are not skipped by default and only the "Same Size" criteria for duplicates is used, all files with zero lengths will appear to be duplicates. Use this option to exclude zero-length files from the scan.

Return to Duplicate File Help Topics
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Duplicate Files: Performing the scan

Once all of the desired options have been specified you are ready to begin scanning the selected drives for duplicate-candidate files.

Starting the scan

To start scanning, select the button labeled **Search**. During a scan certain visual cues will appear notifying you of the active scan process such as an animated magnifying glass and computer as well as a progress gauge and current folder data. The button labeled **Cancel** may be used during a scan to abort the process.

Aborting an active scan

If during the scanning process you would like to immediately abort and only display the files that have been found thus far, you may select the button labeled **Cancel**.

Note that some options will not be accessible whilst the scanning process is taking place. Stop the scan or wait until it has finished before accessing these options.

Displayed Duplicate File Groups

Upon completion of the scan, the data collected is analyzed and the found duplicate file groups are displayed in the file list - the area at the bottom of the window. Each new duplicate file group begins with a red arrow and the words **--- Duplicate File Group ---** . The end of a duplicate file group is specified using a blank row in the file list area.

Return to Duplicate File Help Topics
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Duplicate Files: Inspecting and removing duplicate files

Warning: Not all of the files that are found are candidates for removal. Be sure to carefully scrutinize each set of duplicate files before making the decision to remove any of them. It is **always** recommended that you have a current backup of your system before performing any intensive operations using the Duplicate Files tool.

When duplicate-candidate files have been found, the **Search Results** step will be displayed and the file inspection and removal toolbar will appear above the area which lists the found files. This toolbar has a number of functions that enable to you flexibly manipulate the displayed files. The toolbar buttons and their functions are described below:

Remove

Removing selected files

***Note**:* Files marked that could be critical to your system are flagged by a dialog box that appears during the removal process. Only remove these files after a careful and thorough inspection.

To select a single file for removal:

1. Select the file in the file list.
2. Select the button labeled **Remove**.

If after removal there is only one file left in the duplicate group, the corresponding group will be removed from view, leaving one existing master file on your system.

QuickView

Select the button labeled **QuickView** to view the contents of a selected file using the Windows application "QuickView", which is installed by default under some versions of Windows.

> **Note:** The QuickView option will not be visible on versions of Windows that do not have QuickView installed.

If you do not have this application installed you can do so in the Windows Control Panel by opening the option labeled **Add/Remove Programs** and selecting the "Accessories" category on the **Windows Setup** tab.

To use this option:

1. Select a file in the file list.
2. Select the button labeled **QuickView**.

Tools

To access options related to the inspection of found items, select the button labeled **Tools**. The related options are outlined below.

Properties

Select the option labeled **Properties** to access the Windows standard properties dialog box for the selected file. (Double clicking on a file performs the same action.)

Open Explorer to file location

To open Windows Explorer and display the folder in which the selected item is located, select the option labeled **Open Explorer to file location**.

Exclude Folder

Select the button labeled **Exclude Folder** to automatically add a selected file's folder location to your list of excluded folder locations (see Excluding Folders for more details).

Return to Duplicate File Help Topics
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Duplicate Files: Exiting and returning later to finish working with duplicates

System Mechanic's duplicate file tool automatically saves the list of duplicates that you were last working with each time you exit it. When you return to the tool, you will have the option of loading the previously found list of duplicate files in order to continue working with them if desired.

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Fixing, cleaning and optimizing the system registry

Registry Cleaner and Optimizer Help Topics

Fix, Clean, and Optimize the Registry

Compact and Defragment the Registry

Backup and Restore the Registry

Return to System Mechanic Help Topics

Registry Cleaner and Optimizer: Introduction

Over time, the database that Windows and other applications use to store information (the system "registry") can become cluttered with data that is no longer valid or has become obsolete. Such information can range from a reference to a file that no longer exists to a driver that Windows is attempting to load each time you start your machine. This invalid data eventually begins to clutter your registry, slowing Windows down and causing other problems.

The **Registry Cleaner and Optimizer** tool in System Mechanic will clean up and streamline your registry by finding and removing these invalid data references. System Mechanic can also compact and defragment the registry to allow your computer to access information more quickly and efficiently (not available in Windows 95).

To open the **Registry Cleaner and Optimizer** tool, select the button labeled **Fix Registry Problems** on the **Fix** tab in System Mechanic's main window.

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Registry Cleaner and Optimizer: Scan Options

When you open the **Registry Cleaner and Optimizer** tool you will notice a number of options that let you manipulate the way that the tool will scan your registry. These **Location to Scan** options designate the various areas in your registry that will be scanned when looking for invalid data. A brief technical explanation of each option is provided below:

Current User Settings

This area of the registry holds information about the currently logged-in user. Under Windows NT, 2000 and XP, this information changes dynamically depending on who is logged onto the machine. Under older Windows operating systems, this data usually remains the same no matter who is logged in.

Global User Settings

This area of the registry holds information about users that have been configured for the particular machine. The information in this area of the registry is usually used under Windows NT a great deal more than it is under other Windows operating systems.

Computer settings

This area of the registry holds information that remains constant, no matter who is logged into the machine.

System Module References

The registry holds information about shared dynamic link libraries (DLL). If this option is checked, any references to DLLs that no longer exist will be reported.

Virtual Device Driver References

Virtual Device Drivers are files that Windows loads into memory when it starts up in order to support specific hardware or software that is installed on your system. Common symptoms of having invalid device drivers include messages upon startup similar to: "The following file was not able to be found...This file is either referenced in your registry or your Win.ini... You should either remove this reference or reinstall this file's associated application...."

Font References

The registry stores information about all of the fonts that are installed on your system. If a font file is removed without updating the registry, Windows may allocate memory for this nonexistent file upon startup thereby decreasing system resources and performance. If this option is checked, invalid references to fonts will be reported.

File Associations

File associations tell Windows which applications handle which types of documents. For example, if you save a Microsoft Word document and then re-open it by double-clicking the file, Windows knows -- via its file association – that Microsoft Word is supposed to open it. Sometimes file associations are created, and the associated application is deleted or moved, creating errors when its previously associated documents are opened. If this option is checked, any file associations that are missing their associated "handler" application will be reported.

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Compact and Defragment the Registry

The **Compact and Defragment the Registy** tool provides several options for compressing and defragmenting your registry, making it easier for your computer to access registry data. This is particularly useful after you have removed entries from your registry, either using the **Registry Cleaner and Optimizer tool**, or by uninstalling software.

Note: This tool is not available under Windows 95.

To compact and defragment your registry:

1. Check the box labeled **Enable Registry Compacting and Defragmenting**.
2. Select one of the compacting options:
    - Select the button labeled **Compact the Registry upon next system restart** to have System Mechanic compact your registry data the next time you restart your computer.
    - Select the button labeled **Compact the Registry upon each system restart after the Registy has been cleaned** to have System Mechanic automatically compact your registry data when your computer is restarted after you have used the **Registry Cleaner and Optimizer tool** to clean your registry.
    - Select the button labeled **Compact the Registry each time the system is restarted** to have System Mechanic compact your registry data every time you restart your computer.

Your registry will be compacted the next time you restart your computer. Depending on which option you selected, the registry may be compacted automatically during other subsequent restarts.

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Backing up and Restoring your Registry

It is always a good idea to perform a backup of any vital data before manipulating it. In order to save your registry settings or restore registry settings from a backup, use the options provided within the **Backup or Restore the Registry** tool:

Backup Now

Select this button to save a copy of your complete registry information (which you can restore at a later date if needed). To back up your registry:

1. Select the button labeled **Backup Now**.
2. You will be prompted with a window that asks for a file name and location. We suggest keeping the default location, but you may name the backup file to anything you wish. (There may be times when you wish to keep several backup copies of the registry under various names.)
3. Select the button labeled **Save** to complete the backup process.

Restore

Select this button to re-import a previously saved backup copy of your registry data. To restore a previously saved copy of your registry:

1. Select the file you wish to restore from the list of registry backup files you have previously saved.
2. Select the button labeled **Restore**.
3. Select the button labeled **Yes** in the confirmation dialog box that appears.

Note: On Windows NT, 2000 and XP systems, you must reboot in order for the newly restored registry data to be used.

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Registry Cleaner and Optimizer: Performing the Scan

Once all of the desired options have been specified, you are ready to begin scanning your registry for invalid data.

Starting the scan

To start scanning, select the button labeled **Search**. During a scan several visual cues will appear notifying you of the active scan process, including an animated magnifying glass and computer as well as a current registry location data. The button labeled **Cancel** may be used during a scan to abort the scanning process.

Aborting an active scan

If during the scanning process you would like to immediately abort and display only the data that has been found thus far, select the button labeled **Cancel**.

Note that some options will not be accessible whilst the scanning process is taking place. Stop the scan or wait until it has finished before accessing these options.

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Registry Cleaner and Optimizer: Examining Displayed References

Following a scan where invalid references were discovered, the data is displayed in the subsequent step, in columns as described below:

Invalid Data Location

This column contains the information about where exactly in the registry the invalid information was found. If you are not familiar with the way the registry stores information, consider this the equivalent of a folder location in Windows.

Value Name

This column displays the name of the registry value where the invalid data is located. This value name itself may be invalid, or the data contained within it may be invalid. In simple terms, this is the name of the specific place in the registry where invalid data was found. If this column is blank, the invalid data was found to be the actual location specified by the column labeled **Invalid Data Location** (see above).

Value Data

This column displays the actual data (if any) that was found to be invalid, and corresponds to the column labeled **Value Name** (see above).

Last Modification

This column contains information, if any, regarding the time and date that the displayed data was last modified. If this column is blank then there is no current modification data for this entry.

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Registry Cleaner and Optimizer: Removing invalid entries

Removing selected entries

To select a single entry for removal, select it in the reference list. To select multiple entries for removal, hold down the **Ctrl** or **Shift** keys while selecting them in the reference list.

Once you have selected the entries you wish to remove, either select the button labeled **Remove** or select the arrow to the right of that button and then select the option labeled **Remove Selected Entries**.

Removing all entries

To remove all listed entries:

1. Select the arrow to the right of the button labeled **Remove**.
2. Select the option labeled **Remove all entries**.

Expert Mode

"Expert Mode" is an option that allows you enable the ability to instruct System Mechanic to open listed registry entries in Windows' Regedit application so that they may be inspected or edited directly ***by those who having an expert working knowledge of the Windows operating system and system registry***.

To toggle the Expert Mode option, select **Options** from the toolbar above the area where invalid registry entries are displayed, and then select the item labeled **Expert mode**. Expert Mode is enabled if this item has a corresponding check mark, and disabled if this check mark is not present.

To utilize Expert Mode, select one of the displayed registry entries with your right mouse button, and then select the option entitled **Open selected entry in registry editor**.

Note that Expert Mode is not available under all Windows operating systems.

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Windows StartUp Manager

Windows Startup Manager Help Topics

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StartUp Manager: Introduction

When you turn on your computer certain applications, drivers, and services are automatically started at the beginning of each Windows session. The information that tells Windows to automatically start these items can be located in a number of places, ranging from a program group on your Start Menu, to certain initialization files that are executed when Windows starts, to one of many places in the system registry. The Windows StartUp manager tool lets you centrally manage all of these items using one single interface. Using the Windows StartUp manager you can easily add, remove, edit, disable, and enable any and all of these "startup items" in order to keep your system's boot-up process as fast and efficient as possible.

One of the first things many professional computer technicians will do when diagnosing a problem is figure out what is being loaded at the beginning of each Windows session. Knowing what is automatically being loaded and what remains in memory is one of the first key pieces of information to explore whenever a computer system is having trouble. Often problems and conflicts can be resolved by simply disabling or removing certain things that are loaded at startup. You can do all of this and more using System Mechanic's Windows StartUp manager.

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StartUp Manager: Your list of startup applications

When you initially load the StartUp Manager it displays all of items that are automatically being loaded each time windows starts (see also Toggling Expert Mode). These items are described using various columns at the top of the area where they are displayed. The information these columns represent is discussed below:

Status | Program Name | Command Line | Location | StartUp Item Legend

Status

The **Status** column tells you whether the corresponding item is actively being loaded when Windows starts. A green checkmark represents an "on" state (the item is being loaded), and a red circle with a diagonal line through it represents an "off" state (the item is not being loaded but is still able to be toggled back to "on" if desired).

Program Name

The **Program Name** column represents the name or description of the item that is being loaded. This information may not always be available to System Mechanic, may have been stored inaccurately by the original program that created the item, or may be an indecipherable "code" meant to be seen only by the program that originally created the entry. Nonetheless this information, in conjunction with the other displayed information such as command line, usually gives a savvy user a very good idea about what exactly the startup item is.

Command Line

The **Command Line** column represents the path and filename that corresponds to the item that is being loaded during startup. Often this information will give you a good idea as to the nature of the startup item.

Location

The **Location** column represents the area of your system that is telling Windows to automatically load this item on startup. There are several places that this information can be stored:

StartUp Folder

The StartUp Folder is located under your Start Menu in a program group named **StartUp**. Any items located in the StartUp Folder are represented by a corresponding shortcut icon within this program group. The physical location of the StartUp Group is usually directly under the Windows folder, within the "Start Menu" folder.

HKEY_CURRENT_USER\Software\Microsoft\Windows\Current Version\Run

Startup items stored in this location in your registry are automatically started when the current user only is logged in. On systems with multiple user accounts, this information may change depending on who is logged in, but this is most applicable on systems connected to a network and most prevalent under Windows NT.

HKEY_CURRENT_USER\Software\Microsoft\Windows\Current Version\RunOnce

Startup items stored in this location are handled exactly the same as the previous location, except that items are only run *one time* and then automatically removed.

HKEY_LOCAL_MACHINE\Software\Microsoft\Windows\Current Version\Run

Startup items stored in this location in your registry are automatically started each Windows session no matter who is logged in.

HKEY_LOCAL_MACHINE\Software\Microsoft\Windows\Current Version\RunOnce

Startup items stored in this location are handled exactly the same as the previous location, except that items are only run *one time* and then automatically removed from the list of startup items.

HKEY_LOCAL_MACHINE\Software\Microsoft\Windows\Current Version\RunOnceEx

Startup items stored in this location in your registry are automatically started each Windows session no matter who is logged in.

HKEY_LOCAL_MACHINE\Software\Microsoft\Windows\Current Version\RunServices

Startup items stored in this location in your registry are automatically started as "Services" (most applicable under Windows NT), which are programs intended to start before any other programs are loaded and to continue running even after the system is

"locked."

HKEY_LOCAL_MACHINE\Software\Microsoft\Windows\Current Version\RunServicesOnce

Startup items stored in this location in your registry are automatically started as "Services", but are started only once and then removed from the list of startup items automatically. Services, which are most applicable under Windows NT, are programs intended to start before any other programs are loaded and to continue running even after the system is "locked."

Win.ini

The "Win.ini" file is an initialization file that stores configuration data for your system and is processed at the beginning of each Windows session. Within this file are two sections where applications can be added in order to have them automatically load when Windows starts.

Both the "Load" and "Run" sections operate in basically the same way as far as this tool's purpose is concerned: They store a path and filename which is interpreted by Windows as instructions to launch that file upon startup.

All User's StartUp Folder

Windows NT, 2000, XP, or later versions of Windows contain a special folder for startup files that instructs the operating system to load these items when Windows boots, regardless of who is logged into the machine. Any files, documents, or applications placed in the All Users' StartUp Folder will load, regardless of the current user.

Config.sys

Under Windows 95, 98, and ME, Config.sys is a small file usually located on the root folder of your bootable drive (or drive partition). It contains rudimentary startup and driver information that is processed before Windows begins loading. Any items placed in this file must be applicable to the Windows 95/98/ME pre-load process or they will be ignored. The Config.sys file is processed before the Autoexec.bat file described below.

Autoexec.bat

Under Windows 95, 98, and ME, **Autoexec.bat** is a small file usually located on the root folder of your bootable drive (or drive partition). It contains rudimentary startup information that is processed before Windows begins loading. Any items placed in this file must be applicable to the Windows 95/98/ME pre-load process or they will be ignored.

StartUp Item Legend

The StartUp Manager includes a helpful legend located at the bottom of its screen that corresponds with the various states of the startup items listed. The various states are as follows:

Enabled

Items denoted with a green check mark are active and ready to be started next time Windows starts. They are also deemed to be items with a valid path and filename according to StartUp Manager.

Disabled

Items denoted with a red circle with a cross through them are valid entries, but are marked as inactive by StartUp Manager. These items can be marked as active at any time, but in their current state they will not load when Windows starts.

Possible Invalid Reference

Items with a red circle and yellow exclamation mark are active items (meaning Windows is attempting to start them each time it starts), but do not have a valid path according to StartUp Manager. It is recommended that these items be fixed by adjusting their targets, or disabled until further investigation is performed, as they lead to a decrease in performance during the Windows startup process.

Disabled Invalid Reference

Items with a gray circle and exclamation mark are inactive items (meaning Windows is not currently attempting to start them each time it starts), and do not have a valid path according to StartUp Manager. For more information on enabling or disabling items click here.

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StartUp Manager: Disabling and re-enabling existing startup items

One of the most useful features of the Windows StartUp Manager tool is the ability to easily disable and then re-enable selected startup items. This method of management allows you to keep the information related to the item intact while you "test" to see how your system reacts with or without the item loaded at the beginning of each Windows session.

Disabling items

When you first use the StartUp Manager all of the displayed items will be enabled, and marked by a green checkmark. To temporarily disable one or more of these items

1. Select the items (multiple items can be selected by holding down the **Ctrl** or **Shift** keys while selecting).
2. Select the toolbar button labeled **Disable**.

   All of the selected items will now appear with the disabled icon (a red circle with a slash through it).

   These disabled items will no longer be loaded on Windows startup.

Re-enabling items

To re-enable one or more of the disabled items:

1. Select the items you wish to re-enable (multiple items can be selected by holding down the **Ctrl** or **Shift** keys while selecting).
2. Select the toolbar button labeled **Enable**.

   All of the selected items will now appear with the enabled icon (a green checkmark).

   These enabled items will now be loaded on Windows startup.

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StartUp Manager: Adding new and editing existing startup items

Using this tool you can also easily add new items to be started when Windows starts. This is much more convenient than hunting through the system registry and manually entering data, or using any of the other manual methods of creating startup items.

You may also edit any of the existing listed items in order to move them from one location to another, change their program description, or update the command line that is being used to start the item.

Adding new startup items

To add a new item to your startup list

1. Select the button labeled **Add**.
2. To edit an existing startup item, select it in the displayed list.
3. Select the button labeled **Edit**.

   A box with various options will appear, allowing you to configure the item. The options in this box are described below:

Description

Enter a description for the item in this field. For items placed within the "Win.ini" sections, a description is not needed. The information in this area is displayed in the **Program Name** column when listed.

Command Line

The command line is the path and filename of the item that you would like to start. You may either select the button with the folder icon at the right of this field to browse for a file, or manually type the path and filename into this field.

Location

The location field identifies where the item is stored, and corresponds to the **Location** column in the item list. Click here for more information about the various locations that startup items may be placed.

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StartUp Manager: Permanently removing startup items

If you decide that a listed startup item (or set of items) is not worth keeping, even in a disabled state, you may permanently remove it from your list. To do this:

1. Select the items you would like to permanently remove.
2. Select the button labeled **Delete**.

   Your action will be confirmed and then the corresponding items will be removed from your list.

Note that it is highly recommended that you "disable" **(see disabling and re-enabling items)** items before permanently removing them in order to verify that the item is not needed.

If you accidentally remove a startup item, see undoing actions with SafetyNet

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Tracking system changes with System Snapshots

System Snapshot Help Topics

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System Snapshots: Introduction

Whenever you install software you change your system contents and configuration. These changes can range from the simple addition of files to the extensive modification of your system registry and other core Windows configuration files.

Often these changes go unnoticed by users. Sometimes however a new software installation can destabilize your computer system by inadvertently changing critical configuration data, or by causing incompatibilities with other applications. When this happens, simply "uninstalling" software may not correct the problem. If a file or information that was originally present is no longer available, there is no safe way to "automatically" roll-back to the state your system was in before you began the installation.

In this case, the best insight into the issue is to know exactly what was added, modified, and deleted when the application in question was installed, or when the operation in question was performed. System Snapshot empowers you with a comprehensive reporting mechanism which allows you to take a full "snapshot" of your system before you install software or perform other questionable operations. It can then generate a full report afterward, explaining exactly what took place – at the system level – on your computer.

Return to System Snapshot Help Topics
Return to System Mechanic Help Topics

System Snapshots: Action configuration

When you first start the System Snapshots tool you are presented with a step displaying two options as described below:

To take a new snapshot of you system for future reference:

1. Select the button labeled **Create new System Snapshot**.
2. Select the button labeled **Next**.

   See Options for new snapshots for information about the **Options** step that appears.

To compare the current system state and contents with the last snapshot that you created:

1. Select the button labeled **Compare current system contents to last snapshot created**.
2. Select the button labeled **Next**.

   See Options for snapshot comparisons for information about the **Options** tab that appears.

Return to System Snapshot Help Topics
Return to System Mechanic Help Topics

System Snapshot: Performing the snapshot or comparison

During the scanning or comparison process certain visual queues will appear such as an animated magnifying glass and computer as well as a progress gauge and current folder and registry data.

Aborting an active scan

If during the snapshot process you would like to immediately abort without continuing, select the button labeled **Cancel**.

Generating a report immediately after taking a snapshot

If you have taken a snapshot of your system, you may generate a comparison report at any time thereafter (for example, after taking the snapshot and then installing software):

1. Select the button labeled **Create Comparison Report Now**.
2. In the window that appears, enter a report title and path and filename for the report file.
3. Select the button labeled **Report**.

Inspecting the report

The system report that is displayed will contain various items of information about the operations performed during the time the system was being monitored. These are:

Files Changed
Files Added
Filed Deleted
Directories Changed
All changes made to INI Files
All changes made to the system registry

Printing and modifying the report

To view, modify, or print the information contained in the report, select the button labeled **View in Text Editor**.

This will load the information displayed in the report into your default text editor (usually Windows Notepad).

Restarting another report

To restart System Snapshot in order to generate additional reports, select the button labeled **Restart from Beginning**.

When you select this button your current configuration is reset, but the generated report will be saved in a folder named "System Snapshot Reports" in the main System Mechanic folder.

Return to System Snapshot Help Topics
Return to System Mechanic Help Topics

Unattended scheduling with the Scheduled Maintenance Tool

Scheduled Maintenance Help Topics

Return to System Mechanic Help Topics

Scheduled Maintenance: Introduction

One of the most useful features in System Mechanic is the ability to schedule certain actions to take place automatically at certain intervals. Using this option, you can operate various vital system maintenance operations in a "set-it-and-forget-it" manner, keeping your system in top shape without you having to remember to perform the maintenance yourself.

There are five functions that can be scheduled to run automatically using Scheduled Maintenance:

- **Junk Files**
- **Clean Registry**
- **Internet Clutter**
- **PC Parasites**
- **Disk Defrag**

These functions can be configured to run safely without user interaction.

Each of the functions uses the same options and is configured in the same way with respect to scheduling.

Return to Scheduled Maintenance Help Topics
Return to System Mechanic Help Topics

Scheduled Maintenance: Enabling scheduled maintenance for a specific action

To enable Scheduled Maintenance for a specific scheduling action, select the box labeled **Enabled**. When scheduling is enabled for a specific tool, the options under the Enabled box become active. When scheduling is disabled (the Enabled box is not checked), the options under the Enabled box become inactive.

Scheduled Maintenance "tray icon"

When one or more of the Scheduled Maintenance tools are activated, a small "wrench" icon appears next to your clock (usually at the lower right side of your screen). This tiny program is the "engine" behind the scheduling mechanism. It keeps track of when items are due to be run and launches them accordingly, as well as providing you with a way to quickly access the properties for any item and also to access the main System Mechanic application if necessary. The actual Scheduled Maintenance program itself is very small (only 65k) in order to conserve system resources.

The properties for the Scheduled Maintenance tray icon can be accessed by right clicking on the icon.

Specifying a schedule

To select or edit the schedule under which an enabled scheduled item is run, select the button labeled **Change Schedule**. This will bring up the Scheduled Items Properties dialog box.

The Scheduled Items Properties dialog box

This window contains all of the available scheduling options for a given tool. Note that some options may not be available for all tools (for example, only the history/privacy tool has the option to run automatically when Windows is closed down, but not under Windows NT). The scheduling options are broken down into three sections:

Timed Intervals

Every X Minutes

This option will run maintenance at the next run date and time, then wait for the specified number of *minutes*, and then run again. For example, if you specify "every 30 minutes" and the maintenance initially started at 1:00, the next run time would be 1:30, then at 2:00, and so on.

Every X Hours at X minutes after the hour

This option will run maintenance at the next run date and time, wait for the specified number of *hours*, then wait until the specified minutes are matched on the clock, and then run again. For example, if you specify "every 5 hours at 30 minutes after the hour" and the maintenance initially started at 1:00, the next run time would be 6:30, then at 11:30, and so on.

Every X Days at the following time: X

This option will run maintenance at the next run date and time, wait for the specified number of *days*, then wait until the specified time is matched on the clock, and then run again. For example, if you specify "every 5 days at 1:00" and the maintenance initially started on Sunday at 2:00, the next run time would be on the following Saturday at 1:00 (Friday at 1:00 would not yet have been a total of 5 days), then on the next Thursday at 1:00 (exactly 5 days from then), and so on.

Every X Weeks starting on X

This option will run maintenance at the next run date and time, wait for the specified number of *weeks*, then wait until the specified *day*, and then run again. For example, if you specify "every 1 week starting on Sunday" and the maintenance initially started on Monday, the next run time would be 13 days from then (the first Sunday would not yet have been a week), on a Sunday, and then exactly 7 days later on the next Sunday, and so on.

Every X Months starting on day X of the month

This option will run maintenance at the next run date and time, wait for the specified number of *months*, then wait until the specified *day of the month*, and then run again. For example, if you specify "every 1 month starting on day 1 of the month" and the maintenance initially started January 2, the next run time would be March 1 (February 1 would not yet have been a month and February 2 does not match the specified "day 1"), the next run time would be April 1, and then May 1, and so on.

Externally Triggered Intervals

Externally triggered intervals are intervals that are triggered by actions that you manually perform (for example, turning the

computer on or off). The following external triggers are available:

Each time Windows starts

This option will run the maintenance at the start of each Windows session.

Each time you shut down Windows

This option will run the maintenance at the end of each Windows session. This option is only available for the history/privacy tool under non-Windows NT operating systems (that is, Windows 95, Windows 98, and Windows ME).

Next Run Date and Time

These options provide a manual method to override when the action will next run. Remember, the timed interval options base their schedules on when the last maintenance for a specific tool was run.

When you have completed editing the scheduled item's properties select the button labeled **OK**.

If you would like to abandon your changes select the button labeled **Cancel**.

Return to Scheduled Maintenance Help Topics
Return to System Mechanic Help Topics

Scheduled Maintenance: Setting up the action's properties

Along with a specific schedule, each tool contains two additional properties as described below:

Save To Log

All of the actions performed by any tool in System Mechanic, including Scheduled Maintenance, are by default saved to log files. If you do not want the scheduled maintenance actions for a specific tool to be saved to a log file, uncheck the box labeled **Save To Log**.

Show/Hide progress window

When scheduled maintenance is being performed, a small notification window located in the lower right corner of your screen will appear, notifying you that the maintenance is taking place. You may disable this notification from appearing by unchecking the box labeled **Show progress window**.

Return to Scheduled Maintenance Help Topics
Return to System Mechanic Help Topics

Scheduled Maintenance: Working with log files

Actions performed the tools in System Mechanic, including Scheduled Maintenance, are by default saved to log files. The specific actions that have been performed by a tool using Scheduled Maintenance are displayed near each corresponding tool in an area labeled **Event Log**.

Clearing the contents of log files

To reset the contents of a Scheduled Maintenance log file for a particular tool, select the button labeled **Clear Log**. This is useful if you have been running scheduled maintenance for some time with no problems and would like to conserve drive space.

Printing and or editing log files

System Mechanic makes it easy to view, modify, and print log information by giving you the ability to view each corresponding tool's log information in your default text editor (usually Windows Notepad). You can use your text editor to view, print or save the contents of the file. To open a tool's log file in your text editor select the button labeled **View in Text Editor**.

Return to Scheduled Maintenance Help Topics
Return to System Mechanic Help Topics

Scheduled Maintenance: What happens if one or more actions are not performed on time?

If any of your regularly scheduled items are not run at their designated time, they are automatically run the next time Scheduled Maintenance is loaded. Their schedules are adjusted to reflect the last date and time when they were successfully executed.

Return to Scheduled Maintenance Help Topics
Return to System Mechanic Help Topics

Scheduled Maintenance: How often should I run maintenance for the available tools?

Although there is no real disadvantages to running maintenance more often than needed, recommended intervals are provided below:

Junk and obsolete file removal

About once a week is a good interval for this tool. If you are low on drive space and need to make sure that you are always running with an optimal level, every 1-2 days is sufficient.

Ensuring privacy and erasing history

Depending on how concerned you are with the information that is tracked when you use your system, this utility can be run successfully on any interval from once a day to once every few weeks.

Cleaning your registry

Unless you are constantly installing and uninstalling software or making other major modifications to your system, your registry usually takes a little longer than your hard drives to fill with invalid information. We recommend running the **Registry Cleaner and Optimizer** tool on an interval anywhere from every week to every month for optimal results.

Removing spyware

For most users, it is recommended that the Spython be run once a week. If you have particularly confidential information on your computer, or if you feel that you are more vulnerable to parasites, consider running Spython daily.

Optimize/Defragment hard drives

Depending on the level of use your system is subjected to, disk defragmentation is recommended as a vital system maintenance action on intervals between once per week, for systems used every day, to once per month for systems used less frequently. Due to the intensity of the procedure, it is also recommended that the operation be scheduled so that it occurs at a time when you are least likely to be heavily using your computer (for example, lunch hour, early in the morning, or even when you are asleep if you leave your PC on).

Return to Scheduled Maintenance Help Topics
Return to System Mechanic Help Topics

Tracking statistics with Tool Action Logs

Tool Action Logs Help Topics

Return to System Mechanic Help Topics

Tool Logs: Introduction

The actions performed by System Mechanic's tools, whether automatic or manual, are recorded in log files by default. These logs track items such as the files that have been found and removed, references in the registry that have been removed, and shortcuts that have been fixed. They provide a way of monitoring what takes place in System Mechanic.

The Tool Action Logs screen provides a series of tool sections. These sections correspond to various tools, as well as functions that provide statistical information and other options.

Return to Tool Action Logs Help Topics
Return to System Mechanic Help Topics

Tool Logs: The log screens

The Tool Action Log screen includes an area where log information is displayed. For three of the tools there is a split screen (which can be adjusted by dragging the middle separating bar). Split screens show information about actions that have been manually performed and any automatic scheduled maintenance activities that have taken place.

Reading the logs

The log information that is displayed is organized chronologically from top to bottom. Each section starts with something similar to the following:

```
========================================
OPEN SESSION: 1999/05/12 14:10
========================================
```

…and end with something similar to the following:

```
========================================
CLOSE SESSION: 1999/05/10 14:22
TOTAL SPACE RECOVERED: 1508518 bytes (1.47 megabytes.)
========================================
```

The information that is contained within these two markers corresponds to actions that took place within System Mechanic.

Clearing (resetting) the log file information

Over time, the information in your log files will begin to age and lose its importance. When this happens, you may decide to reset the information contained in one or more of the tool log files. To clear a tool log which contains both manual and automatic operation information:

1. Select the button labeled **Clear Log.**
2. Select one of the buttons labeled **Manual Operations** or **Scheduled Operations**.
3. For log screens that detail only manually performed operations, select the button labeled **Clear Log**.
4. To confirm your decision to permanently erase the information in the log, select the button labeled **Yes** in the prompt that appears. To cancel the removal process, select the button labeled **No**.

Note: Resetting the log information does not clear any statistical information, and clearing statistical information does not reset any log information.

Viewing, printing, or modifying the log files

In order to make it easy to view, modify, and print log information System Mechanic gives you the option to view each corresponding tool's log information in your default text editor (usually Windows Notepad). You can use your text editor to view the contents of the file, or edit and print the contents. To open a tool's log file in your text editor:

1. Select the button labeled **View in Text Editor.**
2. Select one of the buttons labeled **Manual Operations** or **Scheduled Operations**.
3. For log screens that detail only manual operations, select the button labeled **View in Text Editor**.
4. Your default text editing application opens with the corresponding log information loaded. Once the information is displayed in your text editor you may print it, modify it, and save it. If you modify the information in a log, you will need to "refresh" the display in System Mechanic in order to view the changes (select the option labeled **Refresh Data** in the **View** menu).

Return to Tool Action Logs Help Topics
Return to System Mechanic Help Topics

Tool Logs: Statistics tab

One of the most useful functions System Mechanic performs is the historical tracking of statistical information for each tool. Every time you remove files with the Junk and Obsolete file removal tool, clean your cache and history, fix a broken shortcut, remove an invalid registry entry, or use any of the other functions within the System Mechanic tools, this information is added to a master database of statistical information, both for the specific tool and for all of the tools together. This information is displayed in the Statistics tab of the Tool Action Logs window. The information includes the following:

Junk and Obsolete Files

Total Files Removed: The total number of files that have been removed.

Total Space Freed: The total number of bytes (and megabytes) of space that has been recovered from your drives.

Registry

Total Invalid References Removed: Displays the total number of invalid references in your registry that were found and removed using the **Registry Cleaner and Optimizer** tool.

Clean Tracks

Total Space Freed: The total number of bytes (and megabytes) of space that has been recovered from your drives.

Shortcuts

Total Shortcuts Fixed: The total number of shortcuts which have had their targets re-assigned either manually or automatically.

Total Shortcuts Removed: The total number of broken shortcut files that have been removed from your system.

Uninstallers

Total Invalid References Removed: Displays the total number of references to uninstallation information that were found to be invalid, and were removed.

PC Spyware Parasites

Total Parasites Removed: Displays the total number of parasites that were found and removed.

Popups Stopped

Total Popups Stopped: Displays the total number of web advertisements that were detected and blocked.

Historical Totals

Total Files Removed: The total number of files that have been removed using all of the System Mechanic tools together.

Total Space Freed: The total number of bytes (and megabytes) of space that has been recovered from your drives while using all of the System Mechanic tools together.

Return to Tool Action Logs Help Topics
Return to System Mechanic Help Topics

Tool Logs: Resetting statistics

There may be times when you would like to reset the statistical information for one or all of the tools. To do this, perform the following steps:

1. Select the option labeled **Reset Statistics** in the toolbar.
2. Select the description of the statistical information you would like to reset.

   If you select **All Statistics**, every tool's statistical information will be reset and the information listed under **Historical Totals** is also reset.

Note that resetting statistical information does not clear any log information, and clearing log information does not reset any statistical information.

Return to Tool Action Logs Help Topics
Return to System Mechanic Help Topics

Tool Logs: Log settings

System Mechanic provides you with the option of toggling the logging on or off for each of the logged tools both for manual and automatic operations. To modify these settings, select the **Settings** tab. The options contained in this tab are described below:

Manual actions

The logging that takes place under Manual Actions occurs when you manually open and perform operations using the corresponding tool. The checkboxes appearing under Manual Actions let you toggle the logging on or off for each tool that is listed.

Automatic actions

The logging that takes place under Automatic Actions occurs when operations are performed by the Scheduler using the corresponding tool. The checkboxes listed under Automatic Actions let you toggle the logging on or off for each tool that is listed.

- To turn logging on for a specific tool, make sure that the box to the left of its description is checked.
- To turn logging off for a specific tool, uncheck the box to the left of its description.

Return to Tool Action Logs Help Topics
Return to System Mechanic Help Topics

Optimizing your Internet and network speed

NetBooster Help Topics

Introduction

Optimization Wizard

Starting the NetBooster Optimization Wizard

Specifying your connection type

- 28.8 or 36.6 kbps dial-up connection
- 56 kbps (or higher) dial-up connection
- LAN, cable modem, xDSL, ISDN, T1, etc.
- Cable/DSL/Satellite running PPPoE

Restoring your system to its original state

Advanced Optimization Options

Manual optimization settings

- Maximum Transfer Unit
- Tcp Receive Window Size
- Default Time to Live
- Blackhole detection
- Automatic MTU detection
- Suport for TCP large windows
- Fast retransmission and recovery support
- Support for Selective Acknowledgements
- Number of Allowed Simultaneous HTTP Connections
- Suggested values

Optimization Profiles

- Saving profiles
- Loading profiles
- Deleting profiles

Internet and Network Diagnostics

Network Diagnostics

- Data graphs
- Transfer interval
- Data points
- Network transfer statistics
- Graph style

Relative Internet Speed Test

- Download test specifications
- Manually specifying a file to download
- Results in Bytes vs. Kilobytes
- Using speed test results to further enhance connection speed

Logs

- Reading the logs
- Clearing (resetting) the log file information
- Viewing, printing, or modifying the log files

Return to System Mechanic Main Help Topics

NetBooster: Specifying your connection type

When you first start NetBooster, the most important thing to do is specify the type of Internet or network connection you are using. To do this, select the button labeled **Your connection type** and choose between the following four options:

28.8 or 36.6 kbps dial-up connection

Choose this option if you use a 28.8 or 36.6 kbps modem to connect to the Internet.

56 kbps (or higher) dial-up connection

Choose this option if you use a 56.6 kbps speed or higher (dual-line) modem to connect to the Internet.

LAN, cable modem, xDSL, ISDN, T1

***Note**: If you use a special method of "connecting" to the Internet after your PC is on, see the notes below regarding optimizing your connection for PPPoE.*

Select this option if you are using any of the following types of Internet connection:

- Cable modem
- aDSL
- sDSL
- ISDN
- Satellite
- T1 or higher
- Any of the above connections via LAN sharing

Cable/DSL/Satellite running PPPoE

Select this option if you have a connection via DSL, cable modem, satellite, or anything else that requires a specific application to "connect" once your computer is started and Windows is running. It is very important to use this option if you use a separate application (which connects via PPPoE) because your connection requires a slightly different configuration in order to achieve optimal results.

Return to NetBooster Help Topics
Return to System Mechanic Help Topics

NetBooster: Starting the NetBooster Optimization Wizard

The NetBooster tool has the ability to automatically configure your system for the best Internet and network performance using preset information that has been gathered through extensive testing on many systems. Optimizing your connection in this manner is recommended if you are not comfortable adjusting your network settings manually.

When the Optimization Wizard is initially loaded, you are presented with two choices:

Optimize your Internet and network connection speed

Select this option if you would like the Optimization Wizard to automatically configure your system for peak Internet and network performance. Please note that you will need to restart your PC after optimization takes place in order for the changes to take effect.

> **Note**: If you are using an NT-based system (Windows NT4, 2000, or XP) with more than one network interface card (NIC), this option will configure all NICs using the same settings. If you would like to configure each NIC separately, you must adjust your settings manually.

Restore original setting before using this tool

When NetBooster is started for the first time, it makes a copy of your current network settings in case you should ever wish to revert to the original settings for your computer. If at any time you would like to restore your computer to its original network settings, select this option.

Upon making your selection from the options above, select the button labeled **Next** to proceed.

Return to NetBooster Help Topics
Return to System Mechanic Help Topics

NetBooster: Manual optimization settings

Windows 95, 98, ME, and NT 4

- Maximum Transfer Unit (MTU)
- TCP Receive Window Size
- Default Time to Live (TTL)
- Blackhole detection
- Automatic MTU detection

Windows 98, ME, 2000, XP, or Later Only

- Support for TCP large windows
- Fast retransmission and recovery support
- Support for selective acknowledgements
- Number of Allowed Simultaneous HTTP Connections

Suggested values

NetBooster lets you edit your Windows network settings using a simply graphical interface. If you do not understand the information discussed in this section, you should not edit your settings manually and should use the Preset Optimizations instead.

To access the Advanced Network Properties editor, select the button labeled **Edit settings manually** on the main NetBooster screen.

NetBooster customizes its functions to suit your particular operating system and connection type. Depending on your connection and configuration, some of the following options may not appear:

Specify Maximum Transfer Unit (MTU)

MTU is the default "packet size" (amount of data) that Windows uses to send and receive information over the Internet or across your network. When your computer establishes a connection with another computer over the Internet or your LAN, the two computers must use a common MTU value to send and receive data. The computer with the lowest MTU value determines the value that both must use. If the MTU value that is used is larger than that used by any network routers between the computers, these routers must split the data packets into chunks that they can handle, thus causing network fragmentation. This type of data fragmentation can actually double the amount of time it takes to send a single packet of information. You can dramatically increase performance by setting Window's MTU manually.

Windows 9X/ME

Windows 95, Windows 98, and Windows ME provide the ability to globally set the MTU value for all network adapters (including NICs and Dial Up adapters).

To specify an MTU value for all devices:

1. Check the box labeled **Specify MTU (Maximum Transfer Unit)**.
2. Select the appropriate value in the menu labeled **MTU Size**.

To allow Windows to use its default settings, uncheck the box labeled **Specify MTU (Maximum Transfer Unit)**.

Windows NT, 2000, XP, and later

NT-based Windows systems allow you to selectively set the MTU for installed network adapters. To do so:

1. Select the adapter that corresponds with the MTU value you would like to modify from the box labeled **Network Adapter MTU (Maximum Transfer Unit)**.
2. Check the box labeled **Specify MTU**.
3. Select the appropriate value from the menu labeled **Specify MTU**.

To allow Windows to use its default settings:

1. Select the adapter that corresponds with the MTU value you would like to modify.
2. Uncheck the box labeled **Specify MTU**.

MTU suggested values

Tcp Receive Window Size

The TCP Receive Window size (RWIN) is the amount of data (in bytes) that can be received before the sender must await confirmation that the data arrived properly. Another element that is directly relevant to this parameter is the Maximum Segment Size (MSS), which is the maximum amount of data that may be received in one network segment at one time, which is calculated as the MTU value minus 40 bytes (40 bytes are allocated for basic TCP and IP information in each segment). Setting the TCP Receive Window size to even increments of the MSS increases the percentage of full-sized data segments used during transmission, which results in more efficient downloading, uploading, and network-based data exchanges.

To manually set your RWIN value:

1. Check the box labeled **Specify RWIN**.
2. Use the slider located underneath the box labeled **Specify RWIN** to adjust the value. The exact value is displayed as **Calculated RWIN value**.

To use Windows' default values, uncheck the box labeled **Specify RWIN**.

RWIN suggested values

Default Time to Live

Default Time To Live (TTL) is a parameter included with each segment of transmitted data. TTL indicates how long the data should be allowed to "survive" before being discarded. TTL is based on the number of "hops" (or network server transitions) that the data segment can travel over before it considers itself to be a transmission failure. The larger the TTL value, the greater the chance that data will eventually arrive at its destination. However, a TTL that is too large may result in unnecessary delays when data is destined to fail due to network errors.

To manually set your TTL value:

1. Check the box labeled **Specify default TTL**.
2. Use the slider located underneath the box labeled **Specify default TTL** to adjust the value.

Suggested TTL values

Blackhole detection

A blackhole, in relation to the Internet, is a situation where your system attempts to automatically determine the MTU of a system on the other end, and is unable to do so because the system on the other end is not able to respond to MTU requests with the proper information. If blackhole detection is enabled, your system attempts to discover whether connected systems support automatic MTU discovery. If they do not support automatic MTU discovery, the MTU will be detected using alternate and less efficient methods, causing performance degradation.

To enable blackhole detection, check the box labeled **Enable blackhole detection**.
To disable blackhole detection, uncheck the box labeled **Enabled blackhole detection**.

Suggested blackhole detection value

Automatic MTU detection

Enabling this setting causes your system to attempt to discover the MTU over the path to a remote host. By discovering the remote host's MTU and limiting TCP segments to this size, TCP can automatically eliminate fragmentation at routers along the path that connect networks with different MTUs. As outlined above, fragmentation adversely affects TCP throughput and network congestion.

To enable automatic MTU detection, check the box labeled **Enable automatic MTU detection**.
To disable automatic MTU detection, uncheck the box labeled **Enable automatic MTU detection**.

Automatic MTU detection suggested values

Support for TCP large windows

Windows 98 and later Windows operating systems allow the acceptance of larger amounts of data before acknowledgement of receipt is required, which can enhance performance for higher-speed connections for networks that have large bandwidth delay products (such as high-speed transcontinental connections or satellite links).

There are three possible values for this option:

- 0 : No Window scaling and Timestamp options
- 1 : Window scaling but no Timestamp options
- 3 : Window scaling and Time stamp options

The default value is 3. Under this setting, large window (RWIN) support is automatically enabled if an application requests sizes greater than 64 kilobytes.

To enable support for TCP large windows:
1. Select the **Additional** tab in the Advanced Network Properties window.
2. Check the box labeled **Specify Support for TCP Large Windows**.
3. Once enabled, select from the options provided in the corresponding drop-down box.

To disable manual specification of TCP large window support:
1. Select the **Additional** tab in the Advanced Network Properties window.
2. Uncheck the box labeled **Specify Support for TCP Large Windows**.

Support for TCP large windows suggested values

Fast retransmission and recovery support

Windows 98 and later Windows operating systems support "Fast Retransmission and Fast Recovery of TCP connections" that are encountering IP packet loss in the network. These mechanisms allow a sender to quickly infer a single packet loss from the reception of duplicate acknowledgements for a previously sent and acknowledged network packet. This mechanism is useful when the network or Internet is intermittently congested. The reception of 3 (by default) successive duplicate acknowledgements indicates to the sender that it can re-send the last unacknowledged packet (fast retransmit) and not go into "slow start" due to a single packet loss (fast recovery).

To enable and specify fast retransmission and recovery support:
1. Select the **Additional** tab in the Advanced Network Properties window.
2. Check the box labeled **Specify fast retransmission and recovery support value**.
3. Once enabled, select the numeric value by using the slider. The default and recommended value is 3.

To disable fast retransmission and recovery support:
1. Select the **Additional** tab in the Advanced Network Properties window.
2. Uncheck the box labeled **Specify fast retransmission and recovery support value**.

Fast retransmission and recovery support suggested values

Support for Selective Acknowledgements

Windows 98 and later Windows operating systems support what are called **Selective Acknowledgements** (SACK). Selective acknowledgements allow the TCP network to recover from IP packet loss without re-sending packets that were already received by the receiver. SACK is most useful when employed with TCP large windows.

To enable support for selective acknowledgements:
1. Select the **Additional** tab in the Advanced Network Properties window.
2. Check the box labeled **Enable SACK**.

To disable support for selective acknowledgements:
1. Select the **Additional** tab in the Advanced Network Properties window.
2. Uncheck the box labeled **Enable SACK**.

Support for Selective Acknowledgements suggested value

Number of Allowed Simultaneous HTTP Connections

According to standard HTTP protocol, browsers are not supposed to have more than two connections established to a single web site at one time. Using this option you can override this restriction and instruct Windows to allow Internet Explorer to establish up to ten connections to a single web server at one time, drastically improving performance. This option is divided into two groups: HTTP 1.0 server connections and HTTP 1.1 server connections.

To adjust these settings, check the box labeled **Specify Number of Allowed Simultaneous HTTP Connections** and drag the corresponding slider controls to increase or decrease the number of allowed simultaneous HTTP connections for the corresponding server type.

Number of Allowed Simultaneous HTTP Connections suggested values

Please note: By altering this setting you are breaking standard HTTP rules and protocol by allowing your browser to consume much more bandwidth than the HTTP standard allows.

Suggested values

MTU suggested values

The key to increasing performance using the MTU is to attempt to match its value with that of your ISP as closely as possible. Some helpful ISPs will readily provide this information if asked, which will save you a great deal of experimentation.

For dial up connections:

As a general rule, most users with dial-up connections experience better results with an MTU value specifically set to 576.

For cable, xDSL, LAN and other dedicated connections:

Most people with faster, dedicated connections experience the best performance with an MTU value of 1500.

*For cable, xDSL, LAN and other dedicated connections **using PPoE**:*

In order to gain maximum performance, set the MTU to 1492.

Note: If you have two or more network interface cards (NIC) in your PC, the values above should be applied to the NIC used for your internet connection.

RWIN suggested values

The RWIN default is 8192 bytes, rounded up to the nearest Maximum Segment Size (MTU - 40) increment for the connection. If that value isn't at least 4 times the MSS, it is adjusted to 4 times the MSS, with a maximum size of 64K (unless TCP large window support is enabled, in which case the maximum value is 1 gigabyte). If the Windows 95 default MaxMTU of 1500 is used, the default RWIN is rounded up to 8760 (1460 * 6).

In some cases, manually setting RWIN may decrease performance because it takes control away from Windows. If the MTU is negotiated to a different value, then the size of the RWIN is no longer a whole integer multiple. For this to be effective you must make sure your MTU is set so that it will not be negotiated to a lower value.

For dial up connections:

Performance can be drastically improved by setting this to a lower value such as 4 times your MSS (MTU-40). The goal with dial-up networking is to bring it to a value below the default 8192. You may have better success with 6, 8 or even 10 times the MSS value.

For cable, xDSL, LAN and other dedicated connections:

At the recommended MTU value of 1500, a good RWIN value to start with under Windows 98 or greater is 372300, using 255 as a multiplier for your MSS (maximum segment size), calculated at your MTU value - 40, which in this case is (1500 - 40) * 255. Under Windows 95 or NT4 without Winsock updates, the maximum and recommended RWIN value to start with would be 64240, calculated with a multiplier of 44.

Other values that have been reported to work well with high-speed connections are the following:

- *513*920, or 352 times your MSS at an MTU of 1500 (must be using Windows 98 or greater to use this value)
- *256960*, or 176 times your MSS at an MTU of 1500 (must be using Windows 98 or greater to use this value)
- *128480*, or 88 times your MSS at an MTU of 1500 (must be using Windows 98 or greater to use this value)
- *93440*, or 64 times your MSS at an MTU of 1500 (must be using Windows 98 or greater to use this value)
- *64240*, or 44 times your MSS at an MTU of 1500
- *32120*, or 22 times your MSS at an MTU of 1500
- *8760*, or 6 times your MSS at an MTU of 1500

TTL suggested values

As the Internet grows, the average number of required data transmission "hops" increases, which increases the effectiveness of a larger TTL value. Recommended values, in order of preference, are 128, 64, and 32.

Blackhole detection suggested value

This setting is applicable only if Automatic MTU detection is enabled. The need for blackhole detection is rare due to the fact that the average equipment used on the Internet will support automatic MTU detection if necessary, and setting this parameter when it is not needed can cause performance degradation. It must be noted, however, that if you are experiencing slow data transfers with this setting unchecked, it might be helpful to experiment with it turned on to see if you experience better results. Blackhole detection is disabled by default.

Automatic MTU detection suggested value

Since automatic MTU detection helps in determining the MTU of the remote connection, it can greatly improve performance. This option should remain enabled unless experimentation reveals that your particular connection operates more efficiently without it.

Support for TCP large windows suggested values

Enabling this feature greatly enhances the Windows' ability to accept more data at once. It is recommended that you use this to its full advantage by selecting the option labeled **3 - Window Scaling and Timestamp Options**. This setting is only available under Windows 98 or later.

Fast retransmission and recovery support suggested values

Recommended setting is 3.This setting is only available under Windows 98 or later.

Support for Selective Acknowledgements suggested value

Since **Selective Acknowledgement** is a performance enhancing option, it is recommended that this option be enabled. This setting is only available under Windows 98 or later.

Number of Allowed Simultaneous HTTP Connections

Best results can usually be achieved by setting the HTTP 1.0 connection limit to 10 and the HTTP 1.1 limit to 8.

***Note**:* By altering this setting you are breaking standard HTTP rules and protocol by allowing your browser to consume much more bandwidth than the HTTP standard allows.

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NetBooster: Restoring your system to its original state

When NetBooster is started for the first time, it makes a copy of your current network settings in case you should ever wish to revert to the original settings for your computer. If at any time you would like to restore your computer to its original network settings, start the NetBooster Optimization wizard and select the option labeled **Restore original settings before using this tool**.

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NetBooster: Optimization profiles

NetBooster allows you to save various groups of settings called **profiles**. Profiles are used to store a configuration that you would like to easily restore if necessary. They also allow you to create and use various configuration sets depending on the type of application or operation you need to optimize. For those who experiment with NetBooster's manual network settings, some may find that one configuration works best with a particular application, such as an online game, and another configuration set works better for day-to-day web browsing.

To access NetBooster's profile functions, select the button labeled Advanced Optimization Options from the NetBooster sub-dashboard, and then select the button labeled **Profiles**.

Saving a profile

1. Select the box labeled **Save current settings as a new profile** and type a name for the profile.
2. Select the button labeled **Save**. The newly saved profile will appear in the menu labeled **Previously saved profiles**, indicating that it is the currently loaded profile.

Loading a profile

1. Select the box labeled **Previously Saved Profiles** and choose the profile that you would like to load from the drop-down list that appears.
2. Select the button labeled **Load**.

Deleting a profile

1. Select the box labeled **Previously Saved Profiles** and choose the profile that you would like to delete from the drop-down list that appears.
2. Select the button labeled **Delete**.

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NetBooster: Network diagnostics

NetBooster provides the important tools needed to analyze your network and Internet performance. A very useful tool is the Internet and Network Diagnostics tool in the Increase Internet Speed sub-dashboard. The Internet and Network Diagnostics tool provides a real-time graphical network/Internet analyzer, giving you access to the following options and data.

Data Graphs

The data graphs located on the lower portion of the Network Diagnostics tab display current and historic throughput values in real time. This information can be especially useful when attempting to determine patterns of data transfer, how much data is being transmitted, and the various dips and peaks in performance. The peak and midrange levels of displayed data are shown at the right of the graph.

Incoming Data

This graph indicates the amount of data that is being received in real time by your computer.

Outgoing Data

This graph indicates the amount of data that is being sent in real time by your computer.

Total Data

This graph displays the total amount of data throughput your computer is handling in real time. This value is computed by adding both the incoming and outgoing graphs together.

Transfer interval

You'll notice as data is displayed on the graphs that it appears at specific intervals. By default, data throughput is measured and the graphs are updated every second in order to maintain the "per second" result that most users expect. If you would like to measure network data throughput at different intervals, you can adjust the Network Diagnostics tools to do this at ranges from every 250 milliseconds to every 2.5 seconds. To modify the transfer interval, simply adjust the slider located in the box labeled **Transfer Interval**.

Data points

The number of data points on the graphs determine the length of time that historic information remains displayed. For example, if you are measuring network data every second, and have a value of 50 data points assigned to the graphs, you can see traffic levels up to 50 seconds ago. To adjust the number of data points displayed on the graphs, adjust the slider located within the box labeled **Data Points**.

Network transfer statistics

The box labeled **Network Transfer Statistics** provides several key pieces of information useful in analyzing network performance:

Current Incoming Rate

This indicates the amount of data according to the set transfer interval that is currently being received by your computer.

Current Outgoing Rate

This indicates the amount of data according to the set transfer interval that is currently being sent by your computer.

Total Throughput Rate

This indicates the total amount of data according to the set transfer interval that is currently being both sent and received by your computer.

Graph style

The information displayed on the data graphs may be shown using a variety of visual formats. To change the graph style, check the box beside the desired style.

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NetBooster: Download speed test

When experimenting with various settings using NetBooster, it can be useful to gauge the results of the changes in order to discover the configurations that work best. NetBooster's **Download Speed Test** tool, accessed via the Internet and Network Diagnostics button within the NetBooster sub-dashboard provides a reliable method called a Relative Speed Test. A Relative Speed Test keeps as many of the elements of the test as constant as possible, including the file downloaded, the location the file is downloaded from, and the exact amount of data downloaded. Although various network or Internet conditions may skew the results of any test when you are not in total control, this is the most reliable method for judging a real download transfer speed.

The functions and results of the test are outlined below:

Test to perform

When trying to compare improvements in download performance, it is important to perform the same test with the same amount of data each time. Speed Test offers three standard amounts of data, all downloaded from the same source site, to let you perform speed tests. It also offers a custom download option where you may specify your own file (which must be in http:// format).

To select one of the preset download tests, select a box labeled **100k**, **500k**, or **1 megabyte**.

Manually specifying a file to download

To specify your own file, select the option labeled **Manually specify a file to download**, and then enter a file location in http format (for example, http://www.website.com/filename.exe) in the field labeled **HTTP file URL**.

Display in Bytes or Kilobytes

The results of the download tests may be displayed in bytes or kilobytes. Select the desired scale using the appropriate checkbox. Note that the displayed test data changes as you change the selection.

Using speed test results to further enhance connection speed

There are a number of test results that are displayed during and at the end of the data download:

Elapsed Time

This is the time that had elapsed since the download started. Speed Test does not increment this value until the first physical byte of data has arrived, thereby providing real results of physical data transfer.

Data Received

This is the total amount of data that has been received by your computer on this download (other network activity is ignored during these tests).

Current Speed

This is the actual amount of data that has been received over the last second. This provides an excellent opportunity to see what is happening during the transfer as it takes place. You'll be able to see certain dips and peaks in performance as they occur by watching this value change.

Average Speed

This is the best indication of your physical throughput capabilities. This value is computed by averaging the data received every second over the elapsed time of the download. If you notice this value increase or decrease after modifying network settings, you can be fairly certain that it shows the effects of your modifications.

Peak Speed

This is the fastest recorded amount of data that has come through to your computer over a period of one second. This value is a good indication of the total "burst" capacity of your connection. Peak speeds are usually quite a bit higher than average speeds due to the fact that your connection cannot maintain the peak transmission speed for very long without slowing back down to "catch up with itself."

Hint: Remember to use the logs as well

You can use all of this information collectively to make educated decisions when testing new configurations for effectiveness. Remember to use NetBooster's logging features to see a history of the configurations used, tests performed, and results

achieved.

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NetBooster: Logs

One of the most useful functions in NetBooster is the historical tracking of the actions and tests you perform. These logs are accessed via the **Internet and Network Diagnostics** button located within the **NetBooster** sub-dashboard. Every time you perform a Speed Test, all of the information pertinent to the test is saved so that you can go back and review it later in order to determine which configuration worked best on your system. NetBooster's logging information is organized and arranged in the Logs tab of the main screen.

A sample log of a download speed test follows:

Start Test: 4/29/2002 12:00:28 PM
Test Type: Download 100 kilobytes
Operating System: Windows XP
----------Settings Used----------
Maximum Transfer Unit: Not specified
Tcp Receive Window: Not specified
Time To Live: Not specified
Black Hole Detection: False
Auto-Detect Maximum Transfer Unit: False
Tcp Options: 3 - Window Scaling and Timestamp Options
Fast Retransmission and Recovery support value: 3
Support for Selective Acknowledgements: True

Data Transfer Start: 4/29/2002 12:00:29 PM
Data Transfer Complete: 4/29/2002 12:00:38 PM
--->Total Data Received: 102400 bytes
--->Time to Complete Transfer: 00:00:09:364
--->Average Speed: 10499 bytes per second
--->Peak Speed: 18672 bytes per second

Clearing (resetting) the log file information

Over time, the information in the log will begin to age and lose its importance. When this happens, you may decide to reset the information and start over. To do this:

1. Select the button labeled **Clear Log** on the **Logs** tab in the NetBooster window.
2. Confirm your decision to permanently erase the information in the log by selecting the button labeled **Yes** in the prompt that appears.

Viewing, printing, or modifying the log files

In order to make it easy to view, modify, and print log information, NetBooster provides the ability to view log information in your default text editor (usually Windows Notepad). Using your text editor you can view the contents of the file, print it, or edit and resave it. To open the log file in your text editor:

1. Select the button labeled **View in Text Editor**.
2. Your default text editing application will open with the log information loaded. Once the information is displayed in your text editor you may print it or modify and resave it. If you modify the information in a log, you will need to close down and restart NetBooster in order to view the changes.

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NetBooster: Introduction

NetBooster is a tool designed to optimize an important group of Windows configuration settings that directly affect your network and Internet connection speed. When Windows is installed, these settings are in most cases not optimized for the Internet or for your particular network connection, and may actually prevent you from reaching maximum potential download and upload speeds due to information "fragmentation" and other redundant delays Before now, there was no simple way to edit these settings manually without exploring and modifying the Windows registry by hand (a dangerous procedure). NetBooster now makes it easy for anyone to reach maximum performance with a few clicks.

Many people experience increases in throughput speed of over 200% when using NetBooster's optimizations. NetBooster does not allow your modem (or other connection device) to *establish* a connection at a faster rate than it did before, but it does allow it to *transfer* more data at once over that connection. This results in faster, more reliable downloads and uploads, email transfers, web browsing, online gaming, and more. NetBooster's effects will benefit all applications that use an Internet connection, including all web browsers, email programs, all versions of America Online, and any other online service such as CompuServe and MSN.

NetBooster works with more than just modem connections. If you are connected via a DSL, cable modem, ISDN, or other LAN connection, NetBooster can maximize your performance. For example, on systems with DSL and cable-modem connections, users frequently experience an increase in download speeds of up to 300%. Non-Internet LAN connections are also optimized using this tool.

Although NetBooster has the ability to automatically set all of the configuration data to the optimum values for your particular connection and system, it also provides an easy way to manually view and edit these settings individually. Additionally, it provides tools such as a real-time graphical network/Internet analyzer, and a tool that allows you to test your relative download speed, in order to give you accurate reports of your true performance. Sometimes, a certain set of configuration values will work well with a certain application (for example, an online game), and another set works better for other purposes (for example, downloading large files). In these types of situations, NetBooster makes it easy to switch back and forth between optimization settings by allowing you to save and load an unlimited number of configuration profiles.

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Securely deleting files and folders

Incinerator Help Topics

Return to System Mechanic Help Topics

Introducing Incinerator

Sooner or later, we all create, view, use, or otherwise come across something while using our computers that we would prefer no one else sees (for example, confidential contracts or other documents). The standard Windows Recycle Bin allows you to delete files and folders, presumably removing them from prying eyes. However, there are very simple ways to retrieve and view files and folders which have been removed in this manner – even months after they have been "deleted". The reason that items can be so easily retrieved intact after being supposedly deleted is that Windows does not actually erase the physical data from your drive – it only marks the very first byte of the drive sector as "available space" so that the operating system can use it if needed. With simple, free software anyone can view a list of all of the files, folders, pictures, and documents you have attempted to delete, and can often restore and view those files. This is where System Mechanic's Incinerator tool comes in.

Incinerator is a Recycle-bin type icon that appears on your desktop. Incinerator is designed to seamlessly integrate with Windows, extending it in all areas where secure file removal is required. You can drag single or multiple files and folders to the Incinerator icon on the desktop or to any of the corresponding locations in Windows Explorer, or select any number of items and right click to access a quick and convenient **Send to Incinerator** option.

When Incinerator deletes items, it is permanent. Incinerated files cannot be retrieved. Incinerator uses higher than US government strength security when "incinerating" items, so you can be sure that what you remove is safe from **anyone's** prying eyes. In order to ensure this level of security, Incinerator uses a variety of time-tested and US government accepted security methods, including renaming the item to a random value, overwriting it with random data multiple times (up to a total of 10 times), and truncating the item's length to zero (making it impossible to tell where a file's data starts and stops on your system and preventing manual retrieval via electromagnetic scanning).

Incinerator's applications are numerous. Companies can use it to protect secret and valuable information from would-be competitors and industrial espionage, home users can protect their privacy from other family members, and employees can use it to prevent associates from "spying" on their work.

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Incinerator: Securely deleting files and folders

Incinerator operates like the existing Recycle Bin tool that is included with Windows. If you are comfortable using the Windows Recycle Bin, you should feel right at home with System Mechanic's Incinerator.

Sending items to the Incinerator holding tank

There are two methods for sending files and folders to the Incinerator for holding (where they stay until actual incineration is performed). When the Incinerator holding tank has items in it, its icon changes into a "glowing" tank to indicate that the Incinerator contains sensitive data. The methods for sending items to the tank are described below:

Dragging items to the Incinerator desktop icon

One way to send files and folders to the Incinerator is to drag them into the Incinerator icon that is located on your Windows desktop:

1. Select the items you would like to move to the Incinerator holding tank.
2. Drag them to the desktop Incinerator icon.
3. Once over the Incinerator icon, drop the files.
4. Confirm the action.

Using the Send to Incinerator menu option

Another convenient way to items to the Incinerator holding tank is to use the menu that appears when you right click an item or group of items:

1. Right click the items you would like to move to the Incinerator holding tank.
2. Select the option labeled **Send to Incinerator** in the menu that appears.
3. Confirm the action.

Restoring items from the Incinerator holding tank

When you send items to the Incinerator, they are held in a "holding tank", where they sit until actually incinerated (similar to the Recycle Bin's method of holding items until the items are actually deleted). Items in Incinerator's holding tank can still be restored to their original location, since they have not been physically "incinerated" yet.

To restore items that are in this holding area:

Automatically restoring items to their original location

To restore any of the items held within the Incinerator to their location before being sent to the Incinerator:

1. Open the Incinerator holding tank by double clicking the Incinerator icon on your desktop or by selecting its corresponding icon in Windows Explorer.
2. Right click the items you would like to restore.
3. Select the option labeled **Restore** in the menu that appears.

Dragging the file out of the Incinerator

1. Open the Incinerator holding tank by double clicking on the Incinerator icon on your desktop or by selecting its corresponding icon in Windows Explorer.
2. Select the items you would like to restore.
3. Drag the items out of Incinerator to another location on your system such as your desktop or another folder.
4. The items will be restored from the Incinerator to the location specified.

Performing the Incineration

Once you have moved items to the Incinerator holding tank, they are kept within until you perform the actual "incineration". Incineration executes the physical process of securely deleting the items within Incinerator. Incinerated files cannot be recovered.

Incinerating all items

To incinerate all of the items within the Incinerator holding tank:

1. Right click the Incinerator icon.
2. Select the option labeled **Incinerate all** in the menu that appears.

3. Confirm your action (this is your last chance to stop – ***please take care and be sure***) to complete the incineration process.

Incinerating items selectively

To incinerate items held within the Incinerator tank selectively (not all at once):

1. Double click the Incinerator icon on your desktop to open the holding tank window.
2. You will see a list of items held within Incinerator, waiting to be incinerated. Select the items you wish to permanently destroy.
3. Right click the selected items and select the option labeled **Incinerate Selected** in the menu that appears.
4. Confirm your action.

Moving items between the Recycle Bin and the Incinerator

If you would like to move items from the Incinerator to the Recycle Bin it is recommended that you move them to a standard folder location on your computer first, and then to the Recycle Bin. (Files that are moved from the Incinerator holding tank directly to the Recycle Bin lose their original filenames.)

If you would like to move items from the Recycle Bin to the Incinerator, simply drag the files to the Incinerator icon or window and drop them there.

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Incinerator: Installing and uninstalling Incinerator

When Incinerator is installed, it appears as an icon on your desktop that resembles a hazardous waste bin and operates in much the same manner as the Windows Recycle Bin.

To install Incinerator:

1. Start the main System Mechanic program.
2. In the Protect tab, select the button labeled **Securely delete files**. The Incinerator options appear.
3. If Incinerator is not installed, a button labeled **Install Incinerator** appears. Select this button to install Incinerator.

To uninstall Incinerator:

1. Start the main System Mechanic program.
2. In the Protect tab, select the button labeled **Securely delete files**. The Incinerator options appear.
3. If Incinerator is installed, a button labeled **Uninstall Incinerator** appears. Select this button to uninstall Incinerator.

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Incinerator: Adjusting the way Incinerator works

Accessing Incinerator's properties

There are several elements of Incinerator that may be adjusted to meet your personal requirements. To access Incinerator's configuration settings:

First, make sure that the Incinerator is installed. Then:

1. Right click the Incinerator icon located on your Windows desktop.
2. Select the option labeled **Properties** in the context menu that appears.

Or

1. Double click the Incinerator icon located on your desktop. The main Incinerator file holding area will appear.
2. From the File menu, select the option labeled **Incinerator properties**.

Available settings are described below:

Security level

Use the slider in the Incinerator properties dialog box to specify how many times Incinerator will overwrite incinerated files with random data before truncating and deleting them. The higher the number, the more secure (but slower) the process will be. A value of 7 (overwriting items with random data seven times before truncating and deleting them) meets US government and military requirements for secure data disposal.

Show progress indicator while incinerating

If this button is checked, a status window will appear when you incinerate items held within Incinerator's holding tank. The status window provides a rough estimate of completion time.

Add "Send to Incinerator" option to right click context menus

If this button is checked, you can access a convenient menu that will allow you to send any file, folder, or combination to the Incinerator. When this option is enabled, you can send items to the Incinerator simply by right clicking them, and then selecting the option labeled **Send to Incinerator** in the menu that appears.

Add Incinerator option under the "Send To" context menu

If this button is checked, you can send selected files and folders to the Incinerator by using the Windows **Send To** menu function. To use this option

1. Right click the files and folders you wish to send to the Incinerator.
2. Select the option labeled **Send To** in the context menu that appears.
3. Select the menu option labeled **Incinerator** in the submenu that appears.

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System Mechanic Mobile Toolkit

System Mechanic is available in a special Mobile Toolkit edition that is tailor-made for consultants, value-added resellers (VAR), MIS/IT managers, and anyone who wants the power of System Mechanic Professional in a **clean portable package**.

System Mechanic Mobile Toolkit provides:

- A special CD-ROM that lets you run System Mechanic directly from the CD, eliminating the need for installation
- An unlimited license for one concurrent/simultaneous user to use System Mechanic Mobile Toolkit on any number of computers
- The ability to perform maintenance directly on any computer by simply inserting the Mobile Toolkit CD, without leaving any files or residual installation behind
- The ability to run System Mechanic Mobile Toolkit on any workstation from a shared network CD drive.

Benefits:

- Technicians can maintain a number of computers using System Mechanic's powerful tools without the need to install a separate license on each machine.
- Mobile Toolkit eliminates the opportunity for inexperienced users to misuse the software, as it is run directly from the CD and is never permanently installed.
- Mobile Toolkit is extremely cost effective for anyone who maintains multiple machines on a regular basis, so long as System Mechanic's tools are never needed on more than one computer at the same time.

Pricing:

- System Mechanic Mobile Toolkit CDROM: $299.95
- Each additional CDROM: $99.95

System Mechanic Mobile Toolkit can be ordered directly from iolo technologies using the following methods:

Secure Online Web Ordering: {button http://www.iolo.com/order,EF("http://www.iolo.com/order","",0)}
Toll-Free US Sales: 1-877-239-4656
Non US Sales: 1-323-257-8888
Fax: 1-323-257-8885 (Click here to print a faxable order form) .

Click here for more information on accepted payment methods.

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Customizing Windows settings

System Customizer Help Topics


System Customizer Introduction


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- Inspecting customization options
- Configuring settings
- Undoing changes and/or restoring defaults

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Automatically updating System Mechanic using the Internet

System Mechanic WebUpdate Help Topics


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Using the WebUpdate Tool

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- Downloading updates
- Installing Updates
- Completing the Update and restarting


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Performing maintenance using the Maintenance Wizard

Maintenance Wizard Help Topics


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- Using the Maintenance Wizard Interface


Available Maintenance Options

- Find and remove junk and obsolete files
- Scan for and remove invalid information from the registry
- Clean up Internet browser cookies and cache files
- Remove parasites
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Performing the Operation

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Adjusting System Mechanic’s general options

System Mechanic General Options Help Topics


Hints and Tips

- Enable tips and hints
- Display all tips and hints


WebUpdate

- Access and modify WebUpdate Options

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Customizing Windows settings: Introducing System Customizer

System Mechanic's System Customizer tool provides an easy way to tweak and fine-tune hidden or unknown features in Windows. System Customizer provides access to hundreds of adjustable items ranging from Windows' general appearance, to the boot screens that are displayed when starting and shutting down the computer, to security settings helpful for system administrators, and more. These adjustable items are categorized in relevant groups for easy access.

Navigating the System Customizer tool

Customization categories are arranged hierarchically on the left pane of the tool. When an item is selected, its corresponding customization options are listed in the pane to the right. When a customization option is selected, its corresponding customization setting(s) are displayed within the area that lies below the customization options.

To access System Customizer, select the button labeled **Tweak Windows settings** on the **Optimize** tab.

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WebUpdate: Introduction

To keep your software in good working order, install product updates when they become available. Software updates address compatibility issues, add features, expand existing functions and help to guarantee peak system security and integrity. Unfortunately, obtaining software updates can be inconvenient and time-consuming.

To help you keep your iolo products up-to-date, we provide an extremely convenient and easy-to-use tool called iolo **WebUpdate**™. WebUpdate connects with our update server automatically over the Internet to ensure that your iolo software products are kept up to date. WebUpdate lists any available updates and provides descriptions. It also reminds you to check for updates, and can even download and install updates automatically for you. With WebUpdate, the process of staying up to date becomes as simple as clicking a few buttons.

Using the WebUpdate Tool

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WebUpdate: Using the WebUpdate tool

Checking for updates

To check for updates, launch the WebUpdate wizard by selecting the button labeled **Download Updates** on the **Options** tab of the System Mechanic main dashboard window.

Once the WebUpdate Wizard appears, select the button labeled **Next** to connect to an iolo update server and check for any available updates. WebUpdate then lists any available updates and their descriptions.

Downloading updates

If updates are available, select the button labeled **Next** to begin downloading them. You will be presented with a status gauge as well as an estimate of the time needed to complete the download process.

Installing updates

Once all of the updates are downloaded, select the button labeled **Install Updates** to replace your existing version of System Mechanic with the newly downloaded update files.

Completing the update

Once System Mechanic has been successfully updated, select the button labeled **Exit and Restart** to close down System Mechanic and restart it with the new updates. You will be informed if you need to restart your system for any of the updates to take effect.

Note: This process may take up to a minute and your computer may appear to have stopped responding during this time. Please be patient and do not interrupt the process.

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WebUpdate: Options

If you would like to change WebUpdate options, select the button labeled **Options** in the WebUpdate wizard. This will display a dialog box that lets you view and change WebUpdate preferences.

Automatically Check for Updates Every X Days

You can use this option to:

1. Toggle WebUpdate's automatic checking and reminder system on and off.

   Uncheck the box labeled **Automatically check for updates every** if you do not want WebUpdate to remind you when it is time to check for product updates.

2. Adjust the number of days WebUpdate waits before checking for new updates.

   Enter a new value in the box labeled **Automatically check for updates every**. The minimum number of days WebUpdate will wait is one day, and the maximum number of days is 360 days.

Connect using a proxy server

If you or your company uses a proxy server to access the Internet you will need to specify this before using WebUpdate. To set up WebUpdate with a proxy server:

1. Select the button labeled **Options** in the WebUpdate wizard.
2. Check the box labeled **Connect using a Proxy Server**.
3. In the field labeled **Proxy Server**, enter the server name or address.
4. In the field labeled **Proxy Username**, enter your username on the proxy server.
5. In the field labeled **Password**, enter your password for the proxy server.
6. Select the button labeled **OK**.

Return to WebUpdate Help Topics
Return to System Mechanic Help Topics

Adjusting System Mechanic's general options: Hints and tips

To change System Mechanic's general preferences, select the button labeled **General Preferences** on the Options tab.

By default, System Mechanic displays miscellaneous hints and tip messages when you visit specific screens. These messages are important and you should read them thoroughly at least once, as they contain important and relevant information about the tool you are using which may include specific warnings, caveats, or suggestions for proper use.

System Mechanic's hint system also allows you to suppress individual hints once you have read them by unchecking the button labeled **Show hints on this subject again**. It also allows you to suppress all hint windows by unchecking the button labeled **Show hints**.

- You can enable or disable System Mechanic's hint system by unchecking or checking the box labeled **Enable tips and hints.**
- If you have instructed System Mechanic to suppress some or all hints, you can collectively re-enable them by checking the box labeled **Reset hints (display all)**.

Return to System Mechanic General Options Help Topics
Return to System Mechanic Help Topics

Adjusting System Mechanic's general options: WebUpdate

You can view or change System Mechanic's general options by selecting the button labeled **Options** on the Options tab.

Select the button labeled **Open WebUpdate Options** to change the preferences that affect WebUpdates.

Return to System Mechanic General Options Help Topics
Return to System Mechanic Help Topics

Maintenance Wizard: Introduction

System Mechanic's PC Maintenance Wizard is a tool that conveniently consolidates several of System Mechanic's features into a single interface for your convenience. The Maintenance Wizard lets you easily configure and run a variety of system maintenance procedures on your PC in just a few easy steps.

Using the Maintenance Wizard, you can quickly perform the following critical system maintenance operations:

- Automatically search for and remove junk and obsolete files and other system debris from your hard drives
- Find and clean invalid information and references in the Windows registry
- Clean up Internet browser cache, cookies, and other items collected while surfing the Internet
- Remove parasites including spyware, adware, and malware
- Defragment your hard drives

To access the PC Maintenance Wizard, select the button labeled **PC Maintenance Wizard** on the **Maintain** tab.

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Return to System Mechanic Help Topics

Maintenance Wizard: Maintenance options

The Maintenance Wizard lets you perform the following types of critical system maintenance:

- Automatically search for and remove junk and obsolete files and other system debris from your hard drives
- Find and clean invalid information and references in the Windows registry
- Clean up Internet browser cache, cookies, and other various file buildup created while surfing the Internet
- Find and remove parasites such as spyware, adware, and keyboard loggers
- Defragment your hard drives

Return to Maintenance Wizard Help Topics
Return to System Mechanic Help Topics

Maintenance Wizard: Performing the operation

The Maintenance Wizard provides an easy-to-understand wizard-based Interface. To move from step to step, set the options provided on each wizard screen and then select the button labeled **Next** or **Start**. If you wish to go back at any time to make changes to previous options, select the button labeled **Back**.

Step 1: Select the type of maintenance to perform

In this step of the Maintenance Wizard you are presented with various maintenance options:

- Automatically search for and remove junk and obsolete files and other system debris from your hard drives.
- Find and clean invalid information and references in the Windows registry.
- Clean up Internet browser cache, cookies, and other various file buildup created while surfing the Internet.
- Find and remove parasites such as spyware, adware, and keyboard loggers
- Defragment your hard drives

Options are divided into tabs that are listed on the left side of the window. Select each tab to see the available options. To instruct the Maintenance Wizard to perform a function, check the box next to the description. To skip a maintenance option, uncheck the corresponding box.

When you have completed your selections, select the button labeled **Start**.

Junk file options

For more information about the options provided in these steps, see Junk and Obsolete files.

When you have completed your selections, select the button labeled **Next**.

Clean registry options

For more information about options for registry maintenance, see Registry Cleaner and Optimizer tool.

When you have completed your selections, select the button labeled **Next**.

Internet debris options

For more information about options for finding and removing Internet debris, see Internet Privacy tool.

When you have completed your selections, select the button labeled **Next**.

PC parasite option

For more information about PC parasites, see Spython. To remove all parasites during your maintenance procedure, check the box labeled **Find and remove spyware and other PC parasites**.

Disk defrag option

To defragment hard drives during the maintenance procedure, check the box labeled **Defragment system drives**. Check the boxes beside drives you want to defragment, or select a defragmentation profile from the drop-down menu.

Starting maintenance

Once you have finished setting options, the Maintenance Wizard is ready to begin performing the maintenance operations.

1. To start the maintenance operations, select the button labeled **Start**. At this point this button's caption changes from **Start** to **Cancel**.
2. To cancel operations while they are running, select the button labeled **Cancel** at any time.
3. When all maintenance is complete, the window title changes to System Maintenance Complete. A summary of actions is provided. You may now select the button labeled **Finish** to close the Maintenance Wizard.

Return to Maintenance Wizard Help Topics
Return to System Mechanic Help Topics

StartUp Manager: Connecting to a remote computer's startup via a network

Using the StartUp Manager, you can connect to a remote computer on a network and examine and modify its startup items. In order to connect, you must have administrator privileges and proper rights to access the registry on the target computer.

***Note**:* StartUp Manager is restricted to accessing only items located under the HKEY_LOCAL_MACHINE section of a remotely connected computer's registry.

Connecting to a network computer

To connect to a computer on the network:

1. Select the button labeled **Network** from the main StartUp Manager screen.
2. Select the option labeled **Connect to a Network Computer**.
3. Use the dialog box that appears to select the computer that you would like to access.
4. Select the button labeled **OK**.
5. A list of all of the applicable startup items will be displayed within the StartUp Manager window.

Disconnecting from a network computer

To disconnect from a connected computer and re-list the startup items local to your own machine:

1. Select the button labeled **Network** on the StartUp Manager's main screen.
2. Select the option labeled **Disconnect from network computer**.

Return to Startup Manager Help Topics
Return to System Mechanic Help Topics

StartUp Manager: Saving and loading StartUp profiles

StartUp profiles are entire groups of startup item settings that can be collectively saved and loaded at once.

StartUp profiles are extremely useful for administrators or support personnel who wish to make widespread changes to a computer's startup items, while retaining the ability to re-enable old settings in one step.

Profiles are also an excellent way of restarting your machine with "nothing running" in order to maximize performance for a certain application such as a resource intensive game or graphics program.

There are also times when certain applications need groups of items to be pre-loaded during the Windows startup process that you may normally find inconvenient to "wait" for.

The process of saving and loading StartUp profiles is described below:

Saving a StartUp profile

To save the current list of startup items to a profile:

1. Select the button labeled **Profiles** on StartUp Manager's main screen.
2. Select the option labeled **Save StartUp Profile**.
3. Use the dialog box that appears to browse to a location on your system where you would like to save the profile.
4. Type a name for the profile in the field labeled **File name**.
5. Select the button labeled **Save**.

Loading a StartUp profile

To load a previously saved StartUp Profile:

1. Select the button labeled **Profiles** from the StartUp Manager's main screen
2. Select the option labeled **Load StartUp Profile**.
3. Use the dialog box that appears to browse to a location on your system where the previously saved profile is located.
4. Select the button labeled **OK**.

Warning: All of the current startup items will be disregarded when you load a new profile, so please exercise caution before loading a new profile. It is generally a good idea to make sure you have a saved profile of your existing startup items before beginning this process.

Return to Startup Manager Help Topics
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Privacy: Other options

The **Other** tab provides the following options:

Recently opened document lists from Microsoft Office

Whenever you open a file in any Microsoft Office application, it is stored in a "most recently used" list, which makes the last several documents you have accessed available from a menu within the Office application. Although this list is useful for quickly accessing documents and files that you may commonly open, it also exposes information to prying eyes about what you have been doing in MS Office.

Check this box to have these "most recently used" lists erased when you use the Privacy Tool in System Mechanic.

Windows Media Player file history

The Windows Media Player stores information about the last several media files that you have played.

Check this box to have the Privacy Tool erase this list.

Real Audio Player's file history

Real Audio stores information and lists about the last several files it has played.

Check this box to have these references erased.

WinZip's recent file and history lists

Winzip stores information and lists about the last several files it has opened or created.

Check this box to have these references erased.

Outlook Express deleted emails

When you delete an email message in Microsoft Outlook Express, the message is sent to a "deleted items" folder, and remains there until it is actually permanently deleted.

Check this box to have your Outlook Express "deleted items" removed permanently.

Opera's Internet cookies and cache

The Opera web browser stores cookies and cache information on your hard drive as you browse the Internet. For more information about cookies and cache, click here.

Check this box to have Opera's cookies and cache files erased when this tool is used.

Return to Privacy Help Topics
Return to System Mechanic Help Topics

Privacy: Managing cookies

Some Internet browser cookies contain helpful information that certain websites use to present a more customized and convenient interface for their users. This information can range from user data and passwords (thus alleviating the need to type them each time you log in), to special preferences and customized layouts that deliver a specifically constructed view of a myriad of information. If all cookies are removed, this potentially helpful information can be eliminated as well (requiring you to rebuild it when needed). The solution to this dilemma is to use System Mechanic's Cookie Manager tool in order to "protect" the cookies that you need, and remove the ones you don't.

To access the Cookie Manager:

1. Open the **Personal Privacy Tool** by selecting the Clean tab from the System Mechanic dashboard.
2. Select the button labeled **Next** to proceed to the **Options** step. Then select the **Internet History** tab**.**
3. Select the button labeled **Manage Cookies**.

The various elements of this tool are described below:

Information Displayed in Cookie Manager

The Cookie Manager contains several columns which correspond to various information about the displayed cookies.

Status

The Status column indicates whether the listed cookie is to be preserved or removed the next time the Privacy Tool is run with the corresponding options.

- A green check mark means that the cookie will be saved.
- A red X means the cookie will be removed.

Originating Web Domain

This column contains information about the website that instructed your browser to save the listed cookie on your PC.

Path

This column shows information within the cookie that instructs your browser where to send requested information back to the requesting site.

Name

This column indicates the name of the cookie, as designated by its originating website.

Cookie Contents

This column contains the information that is physically stored within the cookie. This is the information that is sent to a requesting website. Most commonly, this contains unique identifying elements about your browsing habits, demographics, preferences, and previous web location, so that websites can effectively monitor (for a variety of reasons) different statistics about the people who visit their site.

Options available to you within the Cookie Manager

The following options are available from the toolbar located at the top of the Cookie Manager screen, and in the menu displayed when you right click within the list of cookies.

Mark to Delete

Select this option to **permanently remove** all marked cookies the next time the Privacy Tool is run with the corresponding option. Cookies marked for deletion are represented by a red X.

Mark to Keep

Select this option to **preserve** all marked cookies the next time the Privacy Tool is run with the corresponding option. Cookies marked for preservation are represented by a green check mark.

Invert Selection

Select this option to invert the selection of cookies. For example, if only the top cookie is highlighted, selecting this

option will unmark the top item, and highlight the rest of the listed cookies.

This option is useful if you have a large list of cookies and would like to select all but a few of them.

Select All

Select this option to highlight all of the listed cookie items, so that the **Mark to Delete** and **Mark to Keep** options affect everything listed.

Return to Privacy Help Topics
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StartUp Manager: Toggling Expert Mode

By default, the StartUp Manager tool hides certain startup entries that may be dangerous to tamper with if you are inexperienced with such procedures. If you are comfortable viewing and modifying these items, you may instruct the StartUp Manager to reveal them by selecting the button labeled **Expert** from main toolbar. When this button is depressed, the StartUp manager will not hide the entries that should only be modified by someone with a working technical knowledge of the operating system.

Return to Startup Manager Help Topics
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Minimum access rights required to operate System Mechanic

System Mechanic requires that you are logged on to your computer with at least Local Administrator access rights before it will start. This security precaution has been built in to the product in order to allow businesses, educational facilities, governmental institutions, and other tiered-rights based workgroups the choice as to whether to allow an individual to use a deep-level system tool such as System Mechanic. Administrator rights are also required due to potential problems that may be encountered under a limited user account where data read and write capabilities are restricted.

Nevertheless, some computer or network administrators will want to allow specific limited-access computer users the ability to use System Mechanic. To bypass System Mechanic's built-in Administrator rights check:

1. Select the option labeled **Run** in the Start Menu.
2. In the box labeled **Open**, type **Regedit**.
3. Select the button labeled **OK**.
4. Navigate to and select the following key: **HKEY_CURRENT_USER -> Software\iolo\System Mechanic**
5. Select the option labeled **New** in the **Edit** menu.
6. Select the option labeled **DWORD Value**.
7. Type **IgnoreAdmin**.
8. Press the **Enter** key.
9. Double click the value labeled **IgnoreAdmin.**
10. In the field labeled **Value Data** type **1**.
11. Select the button labeled **OK**.
12. Exit Regedit.
13. Restart System Mechanic.

This procedure should **NOT** be attempted by those who do not have a working knowledge of direct registry modification.

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Registry Cleaner and Optimizer: Expert Mode

WARNING: Manually editing the registry is not recommended for inexperienced users! Incorrectly editing the registry can cause serious problems that may require you to reinstall Windows. We cannot guarantee that problems resulting from the incorrect use of Registry Editor can be solved. Please use the Registry Editor at your own risk. Always have a current system backup.

Under Windows 2000 or later, the **Registry Cleaner and Optimizer** tool will display an option labeled **Expert Mode** under the button labeled **Options** once a scan has completed and at least one invalid item has been found. This menu option lets you toggle the ability to automatically open the Windows Registry Editor at the key location specified. Those with an expert knowledge of the Windows registry may find this function useful, but those without experience in editing the registry should leave this option disabled (menu item unchecked), and refrain from attempting to edit the registry manually.

To open the Windows Registry Editor at a specified key location:

1. Make sure that the option labeled **Expert Mode** under the button labeled **Options** is checked.
2. Right click any entry and then select the option labeled **Open selected entry in registry editor**.

Return to Registry Cleaner and Optimizer Help Topics
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Registry Cleaner and Optimizer: Excluding a location from future scans

If the **Registry Cleaner and Optimizer** tool displays an item that you do not wish to remove and also wish to safeguard from future scans, the means to do so is provided by a customizable list of exclusions as described below.

Exclusion List

The Registry Cleaner and Optimizer Exclusion list is located in the **Options** step of the Registry Cleaner and Optimizer tool.

The exclusion mechanism works by matching the text within a found registry location with the text contained in the exclusion items. For example, if an item with a location text of "HKEY_CURRENT_USER\software\product\setting" was found, and the exclusion list contained an item matching this text, the item would not be considered a valid candidate for removal, and would not be displayed in the final list of resulting invalid locations.

Adding new items to the exclusion list

There are two ways to add a new exclusion to the list:

Manually entered text

1. On the **Registry Cleaner and Optimizer** main screen, select the **Exclusions** tab.
2. Select the button labeled **Add**.
3. Within the dialog box that appears, enter the text you would like to match as an exclusion. For example:
   - If you want to exclude all registry locations that **contained** the word "sunflower" anywhere within the location's text, you should enter this word in the box labeled **Exclude locations in the registry that contain the following text**, and leave the box labeled **Excluded location must begin with this text** unchecked.
   - If you want to exclude all registry locations that **start with** the word "sunflower", you should enter this word in the box labeled **Exclude locations in the registry that contain the following text**, and ensure that the box labeled **Excluded location must begin with this text** is checked.
4. When you are finished entering text and setting the options, select the button labeled **OK** to add the text to the list of exclusions. If you would like to cancel this addition without adding the text, select the button labeled **Cancel**.

Automatically adding found items to the list of exclusions

Once a scan has completed and invalid items are displayed in the list of removal candidates, you may select one or more of these items to exclude from subsequent scans. To do this:

1. Select the items you would like to exclude from further scan results.
2. Select the button labeled **Options.**
3. Select the menu item labeled **Exclude selected locations from future scans.**
4. The selected items will be removed from the list of invalid items (**but they will not be removed from the registry**), and added to the exclusion list. The next time the registry is scanned for invalid items, these locations will be ignored.

Editing existing items in the exclusion list

To edit an exclusion item's text and/or "starts with" option:

1. Select the item in the list of exclusions
2. Select the button labeled **Edit**
3. To change the exclusion text, edit the information within the field labeled **Exclude locations in the registry that contain the following text**.
4. To toggle whether a registry location is considered a match only if it starts with the corresponding text, check or uncheck the box labeled **Excluded location must begin with this text**.
5. When you are finished editing text and configuring the options, select the button labeled **OK** to modify the selected exclusion's text. If you would like to cancel your edits, select the button labeled **Cancel**.

Temporarily disabling items in the exclusion list

Items may be temporarily disabled from consideration as an exclusion rule. This means that despite the text existing as an item in the list of exclusions, registry locations will still be found if they would have met the item's exclusion criteria.

- To temporarily **disable** an exclusion item, **uncheck** its corresponding box.
- To **re-enable** a disabled exclusion item, **check** its corresponding box.

Permanently removing items in the exclusion list

To permanently remove one or more exclusion items from the list:

1. Select the items you would like to remove in the list of exclusions.
2. Select the button labeled **Remove**.

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Clean tab

The Clean tab lets you purge your system of unneeded files, eliminate web popups and online advertising, and protect your privacy by cleaning up your tracks.

- Select the button labeled **Get Rid of System Junk** to run the Junk and Obsolete Files tool in order to remove files that are no longer needed.
- Select the button labeled **Eliminate Duplicate Files** to run the Find Duplicate Files tool in order to remove extra copies of files.
- Select the button labeled **Clean Up Your Tracks** to run the Personal Privacy tool in order to remove traces that may reveal your online actions and habits.
- Select the button labeled **Stop Web Popups** to run the Popup Stopper in order to block web popups and embedded web advertisements.
- Select the button labeled **Uninstall Software** to run the Software Uninstaller tool in order to remove stubborn applications from your system.

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Fix tab

The Fix tab lets you correct problems on your computer, including registry problems and broken shortcuts. You can also get rid of links to invalid uninstallers in the Add/Remove Programs control panel, and recover deleted data.

- Select the button labeled **Fix Registry Problems** to run the Register Cleaner and Optimizer.
- Select the button labeled **Fix Broken Shortcuts** to run the Invalid Windows Shortcuts tool.
- Select the button labeled **Recover Deleted Data** to run iolo Search and Recover.

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Maintain tab

The Maintain tab lets you perform routine tasks to maintain your system health.

- Select the button labeled **PC Maintenance Wizard** to run the Maintenance wizard.
- Select the button labeled **Scheduled Maintenance** to control the scheduling of routine maintenance tasks.
- Select the button labeled **Utility Bar** to enable or disable the System Mechanic Utility Bar.
- Select the button labeled **Relocate Software** to move applications from one location to another.

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Optimize tab

The Optimize tab lets you maximize your system and Internet performance.

- Select the button labeled **Increase Internet Speed** to run the Netbooster tool.
- Select the button labeled **Startup Manager** to run the Startup Manager.
- Select the button labeled **Tweak Windows Settings** to run the System Customizer.
- Select the button labeled **Speed Up Hard Drives** to run the Disk and File Defragmentation wizard.
- Select the button labeled **Defragment Memory** to defragment and recover your system's memory using Memory Mechanic.

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Protect tab

The Protect tab lets you take steps to protect your system from privacy intrusions, system failures, hacker attacks, and viruses.

- Select the button labeled **Securely Delete Files** to enable or disable Incinerator.
- Select the button labeled **System Snapshot** to run the System Snapshot wizard.
- Select the button labeled **Eliminate Spyware** to run the Spython wizard.
- Select the button labeled **Virus Protection** to run the Virus Protection wizard.
- Select the button labeled **Block Internet Threats** to run the Internet Protection wizard.
- Select the button labeled **Securely Scrub Drives** to run Hard Drive Scrubber wizard.
- Select the button labeled **Clean Deleted File Data** to run the Deleted File Data wizard.

Return to System Mechanic Help Topics

Options tab

The Options tab lets you customize System Mechanic to meet your specific needs, view logs, access online help and the iolo website, and buy or register System Mechanic.

- Select the button labeled **Tool Logs** to open the Tool Action Logs window.
- Select the button labeled **Product Help** to view System Mechanic's online help.
- Select the button labeled **Download Updates** to start the WebUpdate wizard.
- Select the button labeled **Visit www.iolo.com** to open the iolo website in your default browser.
- Select the button labeled **General Preferences** to open the General Options dialog box and view or change System Mechanic settings.
- Select the button labeled **About System Mechanic** to view a summary of System Mechanic build information.
- Select the button labeled **Buy System Mechanic** to purchase System Mechanic online.
- Select the button labeled **Enter Licensing Details** to register your copy of System Mechanic.

Return to System Mechanic Help Topics

Memory Mechanic: Introduction

All of the programs on your computer need memory operate properly. Your computer has temporary memory built in to it called RAM, or Random Access Memory, allowing programs to load data, functions, and files into this temporary memory without committing information to a hard drive. RAM acts as somewhat of a "scratch pad" for the operating system, where information can be temporarily stored and accessed without physically committing it to hard drive (which would greatly affect your system's performance). When you turn your computer off, all information stored in RAM is automatically discarded.

When a program is launched, it contains instructions on how much RAM it needs to function properly, whether all-at-once, or gradually as the application is used. The program will work with Windows in order to allocate, or reserve, that much of the computer's memory for the program's own operations. Frequently, applications reserve much more memory than initially required, ensuring that when and if more memory is needed it is readily available (pre-allocated).

It is an application's responsibility to periodically release or "give back" to the operating system any RAM that is not required so as to allow other programs to use and/or allocate it. It is also important that when an application is shut down it releases all of its allocated memory so the operating system is aware that the previously allocated RAM is now once again available for other tasks. If a program fails to release its RAM (whether periodically during operating or entirely when shut down) problems can occur: Other programs that are opened will attempt to reserve memory for themselves, and because that earlier amount is still spoken-for, they may not be able to open or operate properly, may run slower because of increased dependence on a much less efficient hard-drive based substitution for memory call a page/swap file. When software does not release memory properly, it is called a **memory leak**. There are many potential causes for **memory leaks** including improper software operation, system corruption, inefficient or sloppy architecture, application errors or crashes, and even resident operating system bugs.

System Mechanic provides a powerful memory management and recovery tool called **Memory Mechanic**. Memory Mechanic provides two powerful tools that allow you to reclaim improperly allocated memory and combat the problems associated with memory leaks.

RAM Recovery

RAM recovery frees up RAM that is no longer needed by programs, making it available to your operating system and optimizing your system performance.

RAM Defragmentation

RAM defragmentation rearranges blocks of data stored in your RAM in such a way as to optimize memory access times and speed up program operation. RAM defragmentation encapsulates an initial RAM recovery procedure and then proceeds to organize the available RAM in the most efficient (non-fragmented) structure possible so that applications that need to allocate and use RAM can do so in the most efficient manner.

Memory defragmentation and recovery results in:

- An increase in the performance of most applications
- A reduction in application errors
- Improved system stability

Memory Mechanic will also let you control the use of your system's file caching frequency, allowing you to determine and adjust how often you would like your system to commit data to the hard disk.

Memory Mechanic also provides a useful memory-monitoring console that lets you view your system memory and CPU usage in real time. You can leave the Memory Mechanic open to view your memory usage as you launch and close different programs or make other changes on your system, or you can utilize System Mechanic's Utility Bar to maintain a smaller interface that consolidates many of Memory Mechanic's options.

Memory Mechanic's main interface provides slider controls that allow you to easily establish a target for the amount of free memory you would like to maintain, as well as controls that enable you to set a target threshold of free memory that automatically triggers a RAM recovery operation if levels drop below it.

To access **Memory Mechanic**, select the button labeled **Defragment Memory** on the **Optimize** tab located within System Mechanic's dashboard.

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Memory Mechanic

Memory Mechanic Help Topics

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Memory Mechanic: Set RAM Trigger and Target Levels

The **Memory Mechanic** tool contains an automatic recovery option that will trigger if your system's RAM moves below a specified amount. You have the option of setting exactly when you want the automatic recovery to fire, by adjusting the **Automatic Recovery Trigger** threshold.

This threshold can be accessed from **Memory Mechanic's** main screen (or on the Memory Mechanic tab on System Mechanic's Utility Bar), and is represented on the graph as a yellow dotted line. To adjust this threshold, click and drag the bar to the desired level.

The **Memory Mechanic** tool also lets you specify a target amount of RAM that Memory Mechanic tries to obtain when recovering RAM. The higher this number, the more memory the tool will attempt to recover. This threshold can be accessed and set directly from Memory Mechanic's main screen (or on the Memory Mechanic tab on System Mechanic's Utility Bar), and is represented on the graph as an orange bar. To adjust this threshold, click and drag the bar to the desired level.

To access the **Memory Mechanic** utility:

1. Select the button labeled **Defragment Memory** on System Mechanic's **Optimize** tab.
2. In **Memory Mechanic**, select the **Memory Tools** tab.

The **Memory Tools** window consists of a graph that displays statistics about your computer's memory and CPU usage.

- **Target Memory Threshold**: This is the amount of memory that Memory Mechanic will attempt to recover during a RAM recovery operation. You may adjust this with the bar to the right of the graph, or by clicking and dragging the bar to a desired number.
- **Current Available Memory**: Represented on the graph by the blue bar. This is the amount of current memory available on your computer.
- **Auto-Recovery Threshold**: Represented on the graph by the yellow bar. If the current available memory drops below this marker, the auto-recovery feature will activate. You may adjust this with the bar to the right of the graph, or by clicking and dragging the bar to a desired level.
- **RAM statistics**: Listed directly below the graph, this keeps track of your Average Free memory, the Peak (or highest) amount of RAM you've had available, and the lowest amount of RAM you've had available on your system.
- **CPU usage**: represented by the second graph, and by the meter in the right corner of the window. This keeps track of how much of your processor is being accessed by currently running processes on your system.

Starting Manual Operations

There are also two buttons here that invoke important operations:

Recover Memory

Clicking on this button will start the RAM recovery action. The tool will attempt to re-claim any RAM that is improperly allocated and will return it to the free available pool of memory.

Defragment Memory

Clicking on this button will start the RAM defragmentation action. RAM defragmentation moves blocks of data in your RAM to optimize memory access times. During a RAM defragmentation, **Memory Mechanic** carries out a recovery function (as described above) and then proceeds to organize the available RAM in the most efficient (non-fragmented) structure possible so that applications that need to allocate and use RAM can do so in the fastest manner possible.

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Memory Mechanic: Options

You can further customize **Memory Mechanic** through the **Options** tab. Here you can create and enable hotkeys, change the behavior of Memory Mechanic's recovery tool, and enable/disable automatic RAM recovery functions.

To view or change **Memory Mechanic's** options

1. From System Mechanic's main interface, click the **Optimize** tab
2. Select the button labeled **Defragment Memory** to open the **Memory Mechanic** window.
3. Click the **Options** tab.

Within the **Options** tab you have the following choices that you can define and configure.

Memory operation system priority

Turning this option on will assign the Memory Mechanic the primary position in regard to system memory and resources. This will ensure that the utility is as quick and effective as possible, however it will slow other processes or programs you may have open on your system during intensive actions such as recovery and defragmentation.

Leaving this option unchecked will instruct the Memory Mechanic tool to yield to other processes during its own operations, however, it may take longer for Memory Mechanic's functions to complete as less total system resources will be made immediately available to it.

Automatic RAM recovery hotkey

Type a hotkey combination into the associated field and check the box labeled **Enable automatic RAM recovery hotkey** if you want to use a hotkey to launch a RAM recovery action without entering the Memory Mechanic interface. (Note: System Mechanic or the Utility Bar tool must be active.)

Automatic RAM defrag hotkey

Type a hotkey into the associated field and check the box labeled Enable automatic RAM defrag hotkey if you want to use a hotkey to launch a RAM defragmentation action without entering the Memory Mechanic interface.

> **Note**: Memory Mechanic or System Mechanic's Utility Bar tool must be active for this hotkey to function.

Maximum number of passes for RAM recovery

Use the up or down arrow buttons beside the field labeled **When recovering RAM try to reach the target level using a maximum of**… to set the number of times that Memory Mechanic will attempt to recover RAM, or simply type the number into the field.

Automatic RAM recovery

Check the box labeled **Enable automatic RAM recovery** to activate this option. When toggled on, Memory Mechanic will continue to monitor the available RAM on your system, and will automatically initiate a recovery action when your system's memory levels fall below the amount you specified in the trigger threshold on the **Memory Tools** tab.

Prompt before automatic recovery

Check the box labeled **Prompt before performing automatically triggered recover** if you want Memory Mechanic to prompt you for permission to perform RAM recovery. You will be prompted when the amount of free RAM drops below the trigger level that you specify and will be able to respond with various directives, including **abort**, **snooze**, or **disable**.

> When this option is checked, before a recovery action is performed, Memory Mechanic will display a dialog box stating that your available memory has fallen below the minimum specified threshold, and will give you four options to choose from:

- **Recover RAM to the target level**: This option will immediately start a RAM recovery action.
- **Defragment RAM**: This option will both recover and defragment the available RAM.
- **Snooze**: This option will allow you to close the window and schedule its appearance at a later time. If the available memory returns above the target threshold set in the **Memory Tools** window, this dialog box will not appear after the snooze period has elapsed.
- **Disable automatic recovery**: Choosing this option will disable the automatic RAM recovery feature.

CPU usage threshold for automatic recovery

Use the up or down arrow buttons beside the field labeled **Only initiate automatic recovery if CPU usage is below X percent** to set the level of CPU usage above which you do not want automatic RAM recovery to proceed, or type the percentage into the field. To enable this function, check this option's corresponding box.

Memory Mechanic in the Utility Bar

Enabling this option will cause a tab to appear in the Utility Bar tool with the **Memory Mechanic** graph and access to its recovery functions with the click of a button or hotkey. You can monitor your available memory and adjust your settings here without launching System Mechanic.

See System Mechanic's Utility Bar documentation for more information.

Graph update frequency

Use the slider labeled **Graph Update Frequency** to determine how often Memory Mechanic updates its display of CPU and memory usage.

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Memory Mechanic: Defrag RAM

To defragment your system RAM immediately:

1. Select the button labeled **Defragment Memory** on the System Mechanic Optimize tab.
2. In Memory Mechanic, select the button labeled **Defrag RAM**.

Return to Memory Mechanic Help Topics
Return to System Mechanic Help Topics

Memory Mechanic: Recover RAM

To recover any available system RAM immediately:

1. Select the button labeled **Defragment Memory** on the System Mechanic **Optimize** tab.
2. In Memory Mechanic, select the button labeled **Recover RAM**.

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Memory Mechanic: Cache-Safe

When your computer stores information on a physical drive (for example, the contents of a file or database), it may initially store that information in RAM before actually writing or **committing** the data to the disk. Committing data to disk occurs at convenient but irregular intervals dictated by operating system activity and performance requirements, which means that your data may not actually be safely stored when you think it is. An ill-timed power outage, system crash, or other problem can cause the loss of data that is being kept in memory (this data is often referred to as a **cache**). Important data can be held in a memory cache for up to a full minute or longer, depending on the activity of the operating system.

Memory Mechanic's Cache-Safe tool lets you control how often your system commits cached data to disk. You can instruct the operating system to write data stored in memory cache to disk less often, improving system performance slightly but making an accidental loss of data more likely, or you can set the cache to write to disk more often, making the accidental loss of data much less likely if not virtually impossible.

To access the Memory Mechanic **Cache-Safe** options, select the button labeled **Defragment Memory** on System Mechanic's **Optimize** tab, and then select the **Cache-Safe** tab. The following options are provided:

Enable Cache-Safe

To turn the cache-safe feature on, check the box labeled **Enable cache-safe**.

Cache Commitment

To adjust the rate at which cache is committed to disk, adjust the slider labeled **Cache commitment**. The data commitment interval is shown underneath the slider control.

Drives

The checkboxes at the bottom of the **Cache-Safe** tab enable you to selectively allow cache control for each individual drive (or partition) on your system. To enable cache control for a drive, check the box beside the drive name.

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Popup Stopper: Introduction

Most anyone who has spent time browsing the Internet has encountered the phenomena known as ***pop-up advertisements***. These are small windows that open automatically to promote a variety of web sites or products and tend to appear when you visit certain sites. Some are benign, while others are more malevolent, spawning new popups as quickly as you can close them – causing your Internet connection to slow dramatically as your browser tries to load all of the unwanted incoming data.

System Mechanic's **Popup Stopper** lets you block these popup web pages, often shutting them down before you even become aware of them. In addition, it will also filter out many of the graphical advertisements that appear within the web pages you frequent. Preventing these ads from loading will speed up your web page loading times dramatically by cutting out the content you don't need while leaving the information you do.

To launch the Popup Stopper tool from System Mechanic, click the **Stop Web Popups** button on System Mechanic's **Clean** tab located within the main dashboard. This will open the Popup Stopper configuration window. To load and activate the actual Popup Stopper tool, click the checkbox titled **Enable System Mechanic's Popup Stopper tool**.

Once the Popup Stopper is active, a new button titled **Options** will appear. Click this button to access the various settings and blacklists contained within the Popup Stopper. For more information about the Popup Stopper's options, click here.

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Return to System Mechanic Help Topics

Popup Stopper: Options

To set Popup Stopper options, select the option labeled **Options** in the Popup Stopper menu that appears when you right click the Popup Stopper icon in the System Tray. The Popup Stopper Options dialog box appears, letting you view or change the following settings:

For information about managing the keywords used to block windows based on window title, click here.

For information about managing server addresses that you are blocking, click here.

Return to Popup Stopper Help Topics
Return to System Mechanic Help Topics

Recovering deleted data

Search and Recover, provided with **System Mechanic Professional**, lets you recover data and even entire files that have been deleted on your hard drives or external media (such as cameras, mp3 players and memory cards). To open Search and Recover, select the button labeled **Recover Deleted Data** on System Mechanic's **Fix** tab.

For help with Search and Recover functions:

1. Select the button labeled **Options and Documentation** in Search and Recover.
2. Select the button labeled **Read Documentation and Help**.

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Utility Bar: Introduction

The System Mechanic **Utility Bar** is a toolbar that you can dock on your screen to provide access to System Mechanic functions even when System Mechanic is not running. To enable or disable the Utility Bar, select the button labeled **Utility Bar** on the **Maintain** tab in System Mechanic's main dashboard.

In the dialog box that appears, check the box labeled **Enable the Utility Bar** to turn on the Utility Bar, or uncheck the box to turn the bar off. Select the button labeled **Exit** to close the window and go back to System Mechanic's main dashboard.

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Speeding up your hard drives

File and Disk Defragmentation Help Topics

Introduction

Defrag Command Center

- Analyze and defragment using the Defragmentation Wizard
- Manage profiles
- Enable or disable context menu defragmentation
- Boot-time defragmentation manager

Defragmentation wizard

- Determining and understanding levels of defragmentation
- Selecting an appropriate action
- Starting a defragmentation procedure
- Working with Fragmentation Reports

Defragmentation Profiles

- Add a new profile
- Edit an existing profile
- Remove a profile
- Analyzing fragmentation of files in a profile
- Immediately defragment files in a profile
- Remove a profile

Boot-time defragmentation

- Configuring items to defragment upon a system restart
- Defragmenting system files during boot-time

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Defragmentation wizard

The Defragmentation wizard allows you to either analyze the level of disk and file fragmentation, defragment your hard drives, or both. To open the Defragmentation wizard, select the button labeled **Start Defragmentation Wizard** in the **Defrag Command Center** window. The Defragmentation wizard is designed to be the easiest of the defragmentation operations to use and narrows your initial choices down to an analysis action, a Quick Defragmentation, an Optimized Defragmentation, and the ability to run a customized Defrag Profile. When the wizard opens, select the level of action you require:

§ Select the button labeled **Analyze fragmentation status of system drives** if you want to determine the amount of fragmentation, but do not wish to initiate an automatic defragmentation procedure at this time. A report is generated, showing the overall state of the drive and giving you a better idea of whether or not more action will be required. If action is suggested or otherwise deemed necessary, a defragmentation procedure can then be performed on any of the analyzed drives, or even individual files within these drives.

§ Select the button labeled **Perform a Quick Defragmentation** if you want to defragment your drive in the fastest manner possible. The wizard will analyze your hard drive, map its free space, and begin defragmenting files to the first available location that is large enough to hold the file. This is the fastest defragmentation operation and yields a fully fragmentation-free drive with all associated benefits, however it will not necessarily produce the dramatic system performance gains that an Optimized Defragmentation will yield.

§ Select the button labeled **Perform an Optimized Defragmentation** if you want to defragment and optimize your hard drive to ensure continued performance. An Optimized Defragmentation takes longer to complete than a Quick Defragmentation (see above), but results in a drive data layout that actually prevents future fragmentation for substantially longer periods of time than Quick Defragmentation, and also increases overall performance and efficiency of the file system. During the defragmentation process all files on a drive are moved to the beginning or "front" of the drive, to free up more continuous segments of clusters along your hard drive and allow the drive's mechanical parts to move less before finding files, thus reducing wear and tear and extending the life of the device.

§ Select the button labeled **Run a Defragmentation Profile** if you want to defragment a set of files that have been defined in a Defragmentation profile.

§ If you want to configure report options, click the **Report Options** link.

To begin the selected action:

1. Select the button labeled **Next**.
2. If you are performing a defragmentation based on a profile, the items contained within the profile will be displayed for confirmation. Select the button labeled **Next** to initiate the defragmentation procedure.
   If you are performing a non profile-based action, the **Select Volume** tab appears. Check the box beside each drive that you wish to analyze or defragment.
3. Select the button labeled **Next**. System Mechanic begins the analysis or defragmentation. A status window shows you the progress. To cancel the defragmentation process, select the button labeled **Cancel**. Once the defragmentation is complete, a report is provided showing the level of fragmentation.

Return to File and Disk Defragmentation Help Topics
Return to System Mechanic Help Topics

File and Disk Defragmentation: Introduction

Your computer stores files on your hard drive in chunks of data called clusters. Initially, the hard drive is nearly empty of data, and each file that is written to the hard drive is written into a series of consecutive (or contiguous) clusters, located next to each other on your hard drive. When all the clusters that store a file are located together, they can be read quickly by your computer, enhancing file access performance and speeding up operations on your computer.

Over time, as your hard drive fills with data, the available blocks of unused clusters get smaller and smaller. Any time that you save a file that is larger than the ***largest*** available block of clusters, your computer chops up the file and stores it in clusters that are not located beside each other. This **"fragmentation"** of your file is carried out invisibly and without your knowledge, but results in slower performance when your computer reads that file again and has to look for clusters in different locations on your drive. The more you use your computer, the more fragmented files become as they are written, removed, and rewritten. Eventually, the performance of your system suffers drastically as your computer has to scan the hard drive more frequently to find and compile all of the pieces of the file together.

It is recommended that you defragment your hard drive periodically to maintain your system performance, and to prevent data or file corruption. Defragmenting your disk involves rearranging the files on your hard drive so that each file is stored in a series of consecutive clusters that can be read quickly by your computer.

System Mechanic's Defragmentation tools give you several flexible and convenient choices of optimizing your hard drives and ensuring your system's maximum performance. The main features are described below.

Quick Defrag
A Quick Defrag action defragments the drive in the fastest manner possible. All files are defragmented. This option does not pack file data or relocate all files to locations which increase file access, write, and load speeds. This option does not include steps to reduce future file fragmentation.

Optimized Defrag
An Optimized Defragmentation defragments the drive not only by eliminating data fragmentation, but also by relocating and packing all data in order to facilitate file access, write, and load speeds. In addition, this drastically reduces the tendency for future fragmentation to occur. Optimized defragmentation ensures that your data remains defragmented for a longer time, reduces wear and tear on your hard drives by eliminating superfluous drive access, and increases overall system speed and stability by packing data into the most efficient locations available. Optimized defragmentation requires more time to complete than Quick Defragmentation.

Defrag Profiles
You can even create a profile containing individual files and folders that you would like to defragment, then run them from the Profile menu, the Defrag Wizard, and the Maintenance Wizard. You can even schedule the Defrag tool to run the profile periodically with the Scheduled Maintenance Tool.

Context Menu Defrag
System Mechanic also provides an option in context menus in Windows Explorer that lets you defragment individual files (for example, large media files that you need to run regularly and that demand high performance).

To begin using System Mechanic's defragmentation tools, or to enable the **Context Menu Defrag** option, select the button labeled **Speed up hard drives** on the **Optimize** Tab in System Mechanic's main window. **Defrag Command Center** window will then appear.

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File and Disk Defragmentation: Defragmentation profiles

The **Defragmentation Profiles** window lets you create and save profiles that provide lists of drives, files, and folders to the Defragmentation tool. You can selectively choose drives, folders, or individual files to defragment whenever the profile is run.

Once created, you can execute a profile in place of the standard defragmentation operation (which processes an entire drive or set of drives), to increase speed and efficiency through the **Defrag Wizard**, the **Defrag Profiles** tool, through the **Maintenance Wizard,** and via the use of **Scheduled Maintenance**.

To open the **Defragmentation Profiles** window, select the button labeled **Start Defragmentation Profile Manager** in the **Defrag Command Center** window.

The Defragmentation Profiles window lets you:

- Add a new profile
- Edit a profile
- Remove profiles
- Analyze a profile
- Immediately defragment files

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File and Disk Defragmentation: Immediately defragment files

Once you have created your customized profile and are satisfied with its contents, you may then choose to defragment the items within the profile. System Mechanic gives you the option of defragmenting all of the files within the profile at once or the option to defragment only selected files contained therein. The latter option is useful, if, for example, you have previously analyzed the profile and only wish to defragment the most heavily fragmented files.

To defragment your entire customized Defrag Profile:

1. Select the profile within the list.
2. Select the button labeled **Defragment**.
3. Select the option labeled **Defrag All Files within Profile**.

To defragment only some of the files contained in your Defrag Profile:

1. Select the profile within the list.
2. Select specific drives, folders or files in the list at the bottom of the profiles window.
3. Select the button labeled **Defragment**.
4. Select the option labeled **Defrag Selected Files Within Profile**.

Once defragmentation commences, a progress window will appear measuring each phase of the defragmentation process. The status window shows the progress of the defragmentation procedure. The duration of the defragmentation operation will depend upon several options as described below:

- A Quick Defrag will be completed faster than an Optimized Defrag.
- The size of the files and number of items in your profile will extend the duration of the operation.
- More heavily fragmented files take longer to defragment than those less fragmented.
- The more the number of individual drives to defragment the longer the defragmentation process will take.

To cancel a defragmentation while it is running, select the button labeled **Cancel**. This will stop the defrag operation and return you to the Defrag Profiles main window.

Once the defragmentation is complete you will be returned to the **Defrag Profiles** main window, and the files within your customized profile will display their updated fragmentation hazard data to reflect the changes made by the defrag utility.

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Defragmentation Analysis Report

The defragmentation report is accessed from the **Defrag wizard** following a Defrag operation. It breaks down the overall portrait of data on the hard disk shown in the wizard's display into a file by file listing, which shows you the amount of fragmentation in each file on the drive (files that are not fragmented at all are omitted from the list).

The Defragmentation Report Window

The report shows you the number of fragments used to store each file, and a bar indicator (in the **Hazard Level** column) shows the risk of increased inefficiency and performance-loss based on several key fragmentation factors. The report also displays the filename, types, and file size; allowing you to sort the list by any of these factors.

You can select individual files by **left-clicking** with your mouse, or groups of files (by using the **Control** or **Shift** key when you click a file with the mouse), or you can use the **Select** button on the toolbar, which gives you additional options:

- **Select all listed items**: All listed files are selected as a group.
- **Unselect all listed items**: Any currently selected item becomes unselected.
- **Invert current selection**: All currently selected items become unselected and all unselected items become selected. (For example: Highlighting one file, then clicking this option will result in all files except that one being selected.)

You can also filter out those files that you are do not wish to view or take action upon. For example, if you are interested in narrowing down the list of displayed items to only those with the highest level of performance hazard, you may use the **list filter options**. To filter the contents of the Defrag report:

1. Select the button labeled **File List Filter** from within the **Defrag report** window. A dialog box appears, allowing you modify the Report's displayed items.
2. Select one of the following options, depending on the type of filter you'd like to perform:
   - **Top X most fragmented file(s)** to see only those files that have the worst fragmentation percentage.
   - **Top X file(s) with the largest number of fragments** to see only those files that have the largest number of fragments.
   - **Top X largest files** to see only the largest files.
   - **All Files** to remove any currently active filter and view all the files in the report.
3. Select the button labeled **OK** to apply your selection.

Defragmenting Files From the Report Window

System Mechanic also allows you to begin defragmenting directly from the report window. You can defragment one file, a group of files, or all displayed files. To defragment files which appear in the report:

1. Select the files in the list that you would like to defragment.
2. Select the button labeled **Defrag Selected**.
3. The Defrag wizard will begin running a Quick Defragmentation operation on the listed files.

Files That Cannot be Defragmented

If, for any reason, the selected files cannot be defragmented, a dialog box will inform you of this and a second tab will become available on the **Defrag Report** window titled **File(s) not defragmented**. This tab will contain a listing of all files that could not be defragmented and the reason why (if available). The reasons are explained as follows:

Unknown

The reason the file could not be defragmented was unable to be determined.

Moved or Deleted

The specified file was either moved to a new location or deleted from the hard drive between the time the report was generated and the time that defragmentation of the file was attempted.

In Use

The file is currently open by another application (or the operating system itself) in an exclusive mode which allows other applications to read and gather information about it (thus fragmentation information is available), but not change it any way (hence physical defragmentation is not possible at this time).

Locked

The file is currently locked exclusively by another application (or the operating system itself). The operating system has

instructed the defragmentation mechanism that this file is not to be changed until the locked status is removed.

Insufficient Space

There is not enough contiguous free space on the drive to place the file on one single contiguous chain of data. This reason is usually associated with drives that are beyond 80 or 90% full, and with files that are very large.

Note: Even if your drive has more total free space than the size of the file in question, it still may not be able to complete a defragmentation on that file because there isn't ***one contiguous section*** of free space large enough to hold the entire file. This reason is often overcome by defragmenting the drive using the optimized method, as in this procedure the data is packed to the beginning of the drive – literally consolidating all free space into one single block.

Adding Items to a Defragmentation Profile

You can also add listed files from the report into an existing customized Defrag Profile, or you can use highlighted files to create a new customized Defrag Profile. An example use of this mechanism would be to create several profiles in order to break apart a large-scale defrag operation into several smaller operations that can be run at separate times.

To manage profiles:

1. Highlight the files that are to be added to a profile.
2. Select the button labeled **Profiles**.
3. Select one of the options below to invoke the desired action:
   - **Save selected files as new Profile**: Create a new Defragmentation profile containing the currently selected files.
   - **Add Selection to existing Profile**: Add the selected files to an existing profile.
   - **Manage defrag profiles**: Open the Defragmentation Profiles window.

Boot-time Defrag

You can add files in the **Filename** list to the Boot-time Defrag. You can add selected files or all files.

To add selected files to the boot-time defrag:

1. Click a file to highlight it.
   Note: To select more files, click each file, and press **CTRL**. To select adjacent files, click the first and last files in the series of adjacent files, and press **SHIFT**.
2. From the **Boot-time Defrag** list, select **Defrag selected file(s) at boot-time**.

To add all files to the boot-time defrag:

- From **the Boot-time Defrag** list, select **Defrag all files at boot-time**.

Refresh

To configure new report options and run another analysis:

1. Click **Refresh**.
   The **Report Options** dialog box appears.
2. Do one of the following:

To	Do this
Select the files with the most fragments	1. Select **Top most fragmented file(s)**. 2. In the box, type a number, or click the up and down arrows to increase or decrease the number. **Note**: The fewer the files that are in the report, the quicker the analysis process is. Thirty is recommended.
Select the largest fragmented files (in size)	1. Select **Top largest fragmented file(s)**. 2. In the box, type a number, or click the up and down arrows to increase or decrease the number. **Note**: The fewer the files that are in the report, the quicker the analysis process is. Thirty is recommended.
Select all fragmented files	- Select **All fragmented files**. **Important Note!** This option can greatly increase the duration of the analysis process.

3. Click **OK**.
   The analysis runs again, and the files appear in the **Filename** list.

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Fragmentation analysis

Fragmentation is the splitting of files across clusters that are not located together, forcing your computer to seek a number of different clusters in order to read a file. As the fragmentation on the drive worsens, the more likely it is that you will experience a severe performance reduction in your computer's speed and file load/access times.

Analyzing your hard drive will give you a better picture of its current fragmentation status and give you a better idea of whether or not it is time to perform a full defragmentation of the drive. A fragmentation analysis scans your hard drive(s) for files and data clusters, tracks a fragmentation percentage based on this collective data, and determines an overall amount of fragmentation for a drive, folder or file.

When the fragmentation analysis is complete, information pertaining to the defragmentation requirements of each analyzed drive is displayed as described below:

Total percentage of fragmentation on your drive
The larger this number is, the more necessary it is to defragment the drive.

A graphical representation of the data clusters on the analyzed drive
With a color-keyed map indicating various positions and classifications of the drive layout as follows:

- **Green** blocks show free (empty) space on your drive.
- **Blue** blocks show areas of the drive that are not fragmented (files are stored on contiguous clusters).
- **Red** blocks show areas of the drive that are fragmented (files are split so that they are stored on clusters that are not contiguous).
- **Grey** blocks show areas of the drive that are occupied by integral system files such as the operating system's pagefile, virtual memory, directory and file data structures, etc.

Viewing a File-based Fragmentation Report

System Mechanic also gives you the option of viewing the analysis in a file-by-file report. This option is more detailed and specific, listing all of the fragmented files on your computer, and allowing you to sort them by filename, file type, the size of the file, the number of fragments the files is in, or the overall fragmentation severity.

To view a fragmentation report, select the button labeled **Report**. A second window will open displaying a listing of all of the fragmented files on the selected drive, their size, and the severity of fragmentation found.

For additional information on the **Fragmentation Report** window, see the topic: **Defragmentation Analysis Report.**

Defragmenting After an Analysis Has Been Generated

To defragment immediately following an analysis of the drive:

1. Select the button labeled **Defragment**.
2. A list of options will appear. Select the appropriate function as described below:

Quick Defragment Selected Volume
Quickly defragments the currently selected drive. This option will defragment files and move them to the first block of continuous clusters available the will hold the file. This operation is fast, but requires ample free space and will not prevent defragmentation from occurring in the future as effectively as an Optimized defragmentation.

Optimized Defragment Selected Volume
Defragments and optimizes the currently selected drive. This option takes longer than the Quick defragmentation and will move all of the information on the hard drive to the beginning of the disk, reducing non-contiguous clusters and protecting against disk fragmentation in the future.

Quick Defragment All Drives (if multiple drives were analyzed)
Performs a Quick defragmentation on all displayed drives.

Optimized Defragment All Drives (if multiple drives were analyzed)
Performs an Optimized defragmentation on all displayed drives.

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Fragmentation status

During a fragmentation analysis or a defragmentation, you are shown a status window that reports the progress of the analysis or defragmentation. The initial status display provides a progress bar. Once the level of fragmentation is determined, a cylinder graphic appears, showing a pictorial view of your hard drive with color coding to represent free space, fragmented space, and space used by system files.

- Green blocks show free (empty) space on your drive.
- Blue blocks show areas of the drive that are not fragmented (files are stored on contiguous clusters).
- Red blocks show areas of the drive that are fragmented (files are split so that they are stored on clusters that are not contiguous).
- Grey blocks show areas of the drive that are occupied by system files.

You can watch the defragmentation occurring on the graph. The red blocks disappear, replaced with blue blocks, as your data is defragmented.

Quick Defragmentation

Defragments the drive in the fastest manner possible. All files are defragmented. This option does not pack file data or relocate all files to locations which increase file access, write, and load speeds. This option does not include steps to reduce future file fragmentation.

Optimized Defragmentation

Defragments the drive not only by eliminating data fragmentation, but also by relocating and packing all data in order to facilitate file access, write, and load speeds. In addition, this drastically reduces the tendency for future fragmentation to occur. Optimized defragmentation ensures that your data remains defragmented for a longer time, reduces wear and tear on your hard drives by eliminating superfluous drive access, and increases overall system speed and stability by packing data into the most efficient locations available. Optimized defragmentation requires more time to complete than Quick Defragmentation.

File and Disk Defragmentation: Analyzing a profile

Once you have created a Defrag Profile, you can perform all standard defragmentation actions on it.

For example:

§ You can analyze one file or all of the files within the profile.

§ You can defrag the entire profile.

§ You can go back and add or subtract files from the customized profile.

A **profile analysis** is very similar to a **drive analysis**. System Mechanic analyzes all of the selected files and examines their size, clusters, the size of the clusters, and the percentage of fragmentation of the file.

In turn, System Mechanic then uses this information from the analysis to produce a **fragmentation report** for all of the items within your profile. Fragmentation percentage is displayed to the right of the individual files (in the **Hazard Level** column) and is graphed by a number of blocks forming a single bar. The more blocks a file has in the Hazard column, the more fragmented the file is and the greater the performance hit your computer will take when trying to access the file.

To generate a report of the current level of fragmentation for all items within a profile:

1. Select the profile in the list.
2. Select the button labeled **Analyze**.

A progress window appears during the fragmentation analysis, showing you the status of the analysis. The time an analysis takes will vary Depending upon the number of files and drives you have selected. When the analysis is complete, the profile display will automatically update with the information pertaining to the files displayed in the Hazard column.

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File and Disk Defragmentation: Defrag Command Center

The **Defrag Command Center** sub-dashboard appears when you select the option labeled Speed Up Hard Drives from the Optimize tab located within the System Mechanic dashboard. It is the central interface window for the defragmentation functions from which you can:

- Begin defragmenting your hard drive with the **Defragmentation Wizard**
- Manage defragmentation profiles with the **Defragmantation Profile Manager**
- Toggle C**ontext Menu** defragmentation on or off (see below for more information)
- Configure **Boot Time Defragmentation** options

The Defragmentation Wizard

If you would like to defragment a hard drive or set of hard drives on your system, or would like to analyze a drive's fragmentation level to determine its defragmentation requirements, select the button labeled **Start Defragmentation Wizard.**

Defragmentation Profiles

To create, edit, and manage your personal defragmentation profiles, select the button labeled **Start Defragmentation Profile Manager.**

Context Menu Defragmentation Option

To add a command within the Windows Explorer context menu (the menu that appears when you right-click an item) that will allow you to defragment selected files or folders, check the box labeled **Enable Context Menu Defragmentation**.

To use the context menu command:

1. Select one or more files that you wish to defragment.
2. With the items(s) still selected (highlighted) **right-click** on them with your mouse or pointing device.
3. Select the option labeled **Defragment** in the menu that appears.

Boot Time Defragmentation

Boot time defragmentation is a function that can be configured to defragment items on your PC during the time when it is starting, before Windows is loaded. This is useful for people who would like to defragment one or more items on a system, but do not want the defragmentation process to take place while the computer is in normal Windows operation. To access the boot time defragmentation options select the button labeled **Boot Time Defragmentation.**

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Defragmentation Profiles: Creating a new profile

To create a new defragmentation profile:

1. Select the **New Profile** button in the **Defragmentation Profiles** window.
2. In the dialog box that appears, type a name for the profile in the field labeled **Name**.
3. Type a brief description in the field labeled **Description**. Input a one or two sentence description that will be helpful in reminding you why you chose this configuration.
4. Select the type of defragmentation you would like System Mechanic to perform on your files. There are two options: a Quick Defrag action and an Optimized Defrag action.

    a. To have the Defragmentation tool run a quick defragmentation on your selected hard drives and files, select the button labeled **Quick Volume Defragmentation**.
    b. Select the button labeled **Optimized Volume Defragmentation** to defragment and fully optimize your drives and folders.

5. Select the button labeled **OK**.
6. In the window that appears, select the drives or individual folders that you wish to defragment using this profile and drag them to the list at the bottom of the window. Alternatively, you may highlight a file, folder or drive and click the **Add** button to include the selected items in the profile list.

    Available options when adding folders or volumes (drives) to a profile item list:
    When a folder or drive is selected and you desire to add it or its contents to a profile, two different options are presented, and are described below:

    Add Selected Folder/Volume
    This option adds the selected item to the profile list as a single element and does not list its contents individually. If you do not anticipate the need to selectively toggle or modify which items within the selected drive or folder will or will not be defragmented when this profile is executed, this option is appropriate.

    Add all files in open folder to profile
    This option adds the selected folder or drive to the profile list, and also individually lists each item contained within it (up to one folder deep). This option is helpful if you anticipate the need to separately toggle or modify items that may be contained within the selected folder or drive.

    Removing items from a profile list:
    a. If you need to remove an item from the list of files in your profile, you can select the file and choose the option **Remove** selected items from profile, or press the **Delete** key.
    b. If you need to clear your current list, select the button titled **Remove**, and select the option labeled **Remove all items from profile**.

7. When the profile is configured to your desired specifications, click the **Save** button and then click **Yes** at the confirmation dialog box to confirm your changes and return to the **Defrag Profile** window.
8. If you'd like to cancel the current edits to your profile item list, you may click the **Cancel** button to return to the **Defrag Profile** window without saving your changes.

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Defragmentation Profiles: Editing a profile

To edit a defragmentation profile's name, description and optimization level:

If you would like to rename a profile, change the description to reflect an alteration to the profile, or toggle the profile's defragmentation mode between the quick and optimized defragmentation options, you can use the **Edit Profile Properties** button in the main **Defrag Profiles** window. To change these options:

1. Select the profile in the list located in the **Defragmentation Profiles** window.
2. Select the button labeled **Edit**.
3. Select the option labeled **Edit Profile Properties**.
4. In the dialog box that appears, you may type a new name for the profile in the field labeled **Name**, or leave the information as it is to keep it the same.
5. Type a new description in the field labeled **Description**, or leave the information as it is to keep it the same.
6. To have the Defragmentation tool run a quick defragmentation on your hard drives and files when an operation is performed on the items within this profile, select the button labeled **Quick Volume Defragmentation**. Otherwise, select the button labeled **Optimized Volume Defragmentation** to have the items within this profile defragmented and fully optimized.
7. Select the button labeled **OK** to save changes.

To edit the volumes, folders and files that will be defragmented under a profile:

Once a profile is created, System Mechanic allows you to go back and modify the profile as needed. You may easily add or remove drives, files, or folders within the profile. To do so:

1. Select the profile in the list in the **Defragmentation Profiles** window.
2. Select the button labeled **Edit**.
3. Select the option labeled **Edit Profile Properties**.
4. In the window that appears, select additional drives or individual folders that you wish to defragment when this profile is processed, and **drag** them to the list at the bottom of the window. The list on the bottom will then display the drives or folders you have added.
5. If you wish to remove files, folders or drives from this profile:
   - § Select the items in the list at the bottom of the window.
   - § Select the button labeled **Remove**.
   - § Select the option labeled **Remove Selected Items from Profile**. You may quickly remove all items from the profile by selecting the option labeled Remove All Items from Profile.
6. When you are finished making changes, select the button labeled **Save** and then choose **Yes** in the confirmation dialog box that appears.

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Defragmentation Profiles: Deleting a profile

To delete a defragmentation profile:
If you no longer have use for a profile or want to clear it to clean up your interface, you may delete the entire profile from the Defrag Profiles interface. To do so:

1. Select the profile in the list in the **Defragmentation Profiles** window.
2. Select the button labeled **Remove**.
3. Select the option labeled **Remove Selected Profile**.
4. Select the button labeled **Yes** in the confirmation dialog box that appears.

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Spython: Introduction

System Mechanic's Spython wizard makes it easy to identify and remove:

- Spyware, which monitors your online actions and habits
- Adware, which forces you to watch online advertising
- Key loggers, which 'listen' to your keystrokes looking for passwords and credit card numbers
- Other miscellaneous instances of malware (malicious software)

Spyware is a new, dangerous and rapidly growing computer threat. It infects your computer either by masquerading as useful software that you can download over the Internet, or by secretly installing itself. Once installed, spyware parasites typically collect as much information as possible about you and your computing habits, and secretly send this information to marketing companies over the Internet. These marketing companies then use this personal data to send you advertisements as popups, or sell your data to others. It is even possible for someone to use this data to steal your identity.

Common symptoms of spyware include excessive popup advertisements, unfamiliar toolbars in your browser, system or program crashes or errors, or even a redirection of your browser's starting (home) page without your permission.

This parasitic software may be installed without your knowledge when you visit certain websites, install programs (particularly those downloaded from the Internet), or open infected documents. It may even be installed by way of a system vulnerability simply because you connected to the network in the first place. Spython protects you from these threats to your security and privacy.

To open Spython, select the button labeled **Eliminate Spyware** within System Mechanic's **Protect** tab located on the main dashboard. The Spython wizard opens.

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Virus protection

Kaspersky Antivirus, provided with **System Mechanic Professional**, provides powerful protection against viruses. To open Kaspersky Antivirus, select the button labeled **Virus Protection** within System Mechanic's **Protect** tab located on the main dashboard.

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Blocking Internet threats

Kaspersky Anti-Hacker, provided with **System Mechanic Professional**, provides a powerful **firewall** that protects you against a range of Internet threats. To open Kaspersky Anti-Hacker, select the button labeled **Block Internet Threats** within System Mechanic's **Protect** tab located on the main dashboard.

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Securely scrubbing hard drives

DriveScrubber, provided with **System Mechanic Professional**, lets you securely clean your hard drives, ensuring that others cannot successfully recover your files and data. To open DriveScrubber, select the button labeled **Securely Scrub Drives** within System Mechanic's **Protect** tab located on the main dashboard.

For help with DriveScrubber functions:

1. Select the button labeled **Help** in DriveScrubber.
2. Select the option labeled **How to use DriveScrubber**.

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Cleaning deleted file data

System Shield, provided with **System Mechanic Professional**, lets you securely remove traces of data left on your hard drive after deleting files, ensuring that others cannot successfully recover those files. To open System Shield, select the button labeled **Clean Deleted File Data** within System Mechanic's **Protect** tab located on the main dashboard.

For help with System Shield functions:

1. Select the button labeled **Help** in System Shield.
2. Select the option labeled **User Guide**.

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Popup Stopper

Popup Stopper Help Topics

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Popup Stopper: Options Menu

Additional features of the Popup Stopper tool that can be modified are included on the **Options** menu. From the **Options** menu, you can configure which browsers you want the Popup Stopper tool to work with, customize the sounds this tool uses, turn the ad server blocking on and off, and configure start-up and usage settings.

The options on the **Options** menu are:

Browsers

Select this option to determine which browsers the Popup Stopper will work with.

§ To enable Popup Stopper for Internet Explorer 5.01 and later, select the **Support Internet Explorer** check box.

§ To enable Popup Stopper for Mozilla and Netscape Navigator, select the **Support Netscape/Mozilla** check box.

§ To enable Popup Stopper for Opera 6.0 and later, select the **Support Opera** check box.

Note: Clear check boxes to disable Popup Stopper browsers.

Internet Explorer Tools

The option enables or disables the ad server blacklisting feature included within the Popup Stopper for Internet Explorer 5.01 or later. You can also enable or disable the White List and Black List context menu options (the context menu appears when you right-click an Internet Explorer window).

§ To enable the blacklisting feature, select the **Block URLs on server list** check box.

§ To enable the context menu options for the White List and Black List, select the **Enable Internet Explorer right click menu options** check box.

Note: Clear check boxes to disable features.

General

These options enable or disable general features within Popup Stopper.

Aggressive Mode

Aggressive mode is active by default. It includes a checklist of rules that apply to common types of popups. In Aggressive mode, Popup Stopper checks any new windows against these guidelines and closes windows if they meet any of the criteria (for example, *size or window position*). This mode is the most effective in blocking incoming popup windows because it does not follow the server or title lists, bu it can also block valid content. Disable this option if you find that legitimate windows are being closed.

§ To enable Aggressive Mode, select the **Aggressive Mode** check box; to disable Aggressive Mode, clear the check box.

Auto-start With Windows

Active by default, this option requires Windows to automatically load the Popup Stopper so that it blocks incoming popups and advertisements immediately when you start a browser.

§ To enable Auto-start, select the **Auto-start with Windows** check box; to disable Auto-start, clear the check box.

Enable Logging

When you enable this option, Popup Stopper creates a log text file called "PopupStopper.log," which logs Popup Stopper events. This file logs all popups that have been blocked or shut down and includes the date, time, the URL of the blocked ad, and the reason why Popup Stopper blocked the window or ad.

The log file is a helpful tool when you are troubleshooting issues that you might encounter while surfing the Internet. For example, if going to a particular Web site always causes Popup Stopper to close the main window, you can examine the log file and check the last entry to find which listing (in your Popup Title or Ad Server list) is causing the conflict. Once you have that information, you can either choose to remove the listing, or you can disable the Popup Stopper whenever you visit that Web site.

§ To enable logging, select the **Enable logging** check box; to disable logging, clear the check box.

Sound

Play a Sound on a Popup Kill

If you want Popup Stopper to play a warning sound when a Popup Stopper blocks a popup, you can select this option. You can select the default sound, or you can customize a sound by selecting a WAV file to play. Popup Stopper includes several WAV files that you can use in place of the default sound.

To play a sound on popup kill:

1. Select the **Play sound on popup kill** check box.

2. Do one of the following:
   - To play the default sound, select **Internal sound**.
   - To play a WAV file, select **File**; click the folder button to browse your computer and locate the file; and click **Open**.

Note: To listen to the WAV file, click **Test Sound**.

Explorer Windows

Select this option to set the number of Explorer windows that can be open at once. Any windows that attempt to open once the limit has been reached will be automatically closed.

§ To limit the number of Explorer windows that can be open at one, select the **Limit Explorer to** check box, and in the box next to it, type a number; you can also click the up and down arrows to change the number.

Note: The **limit to** option applies to the cumulative number of both Windows Explorer and Internet Explorer windows that can be open at one time.

Number of Popups Killed

Popup Stopper tracks the number of popups that have been blocked. You can reset this number; you can also select to have the number reset when you restart your computer.

§ To reset the number of popups killed, click **Reset**.

§ To reset the number of popups killed when you restart your computer, select the **Reset on restart** check box.

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Popup Stopper: Starting and Stopping Popup Stopper

To turn on Popup Stopper:

1. On the main dashboard, click the **Clean** tab.
   The **Remove System Junk and Debris** page appears.
2. Click **Stop Web Popups**.
   The **Stop Web Popups—Configure Popup Starter Options** page appears.
3. Select the **Enable System Mechanic's Popup Stopper tool** check box.

   Note: To return to the System Mechanic main dashboard, click **Exit**.

Once activated, Popup Stopper runs in the background and protects you while you explore the Web. A Popup Stopper icon appears in your System Tray. Right-click the icon to access the Popup Stopper menu.

To temporarily enable or disable Popup Stopper, select the option labeled **Active** in the Popup Stopper menu. When Popup Stopper is temporarily disabled, the Popup Stopper icon changes to include a small red X.

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Popup Stopper: Blocking popup windows

The Popup Stopper's default rules lists are extensive but are only a beginning. As new advertising servers are brought online or new marketing strategies are developed, you may find some advertisements slipping by the Popup Stopper, and you may wish to add these popups to your blacklists. To do so, use the menu that appears when you **right click the Popup Stopper icon** in the System Tray, which is usually located near your computer's clock display.

Adding open windows to the rules list

If a popup is already open within your browser and you wish to block it so it cannot appear again:

1. Select the option labeled **Add Open Popup** in the **Popup Stopper menu**.
2. Select the window's title in the submenu that appears.

Automatically closing windows based on title

While adding an open popup to your blacklist will immediately close the window and prevent it from appearing in the future, it will also addendum the browser name to the listing in the Popup Stopper. This will work if you only use a single web browser, however, if you use multiple browsers and wish to block that popup from all of them, you will want to add a new rule to the Popup Stopper's list.

Adding a new rule based on a window title will allow you to edit the window title and use wildcards to prevent **similarly titled** windows from opening as well. To quickly add a new rule to automatically close a window based on the window's title:

1. Select the option labeled **Add New Rule** in the **Popup Stopper menu**.
2. In the submenu that appears, select the option labeled **Window Title Rule** to add a title.
3. The **Add new Popup Window Title Rule** interface will open. Here you can add a word or listing of your own choosing, or you can select an open web page from a list of currently open browser window titles. Edit the listing as you wish (using the **asterisk** (*) key as a wildcard) and click **OK** to add the new rule to the Popup Stoppers blacklist.

Preemptively blocking windows based on originating server

The Popup Stopper will also allow you to ban or block windows or advertisements from specified servers. There are several advantages to blocking these advertisements, the foremost of which is a dramatic decrease in loading time as you surf the web. To quickly add a new rule to preemptively block a window or advertisement from a particular server:

1. Select the option labeled **Add New Rule** in the **Popup Stopper menu**.
2. In the submenu that appears, select the option labeled **Ad Server Filter** to add an ad server.
3. In the window titled **Add New Server to Blacklist**, you can either manually type the URL of the ad server, or select one of the currently active URL's displayed.
4. Click **OK** to add the selection to your blacklist. All further content from the listed server or site will be blocked.

It should be noted that adding too broad of a URL can prevent legitimate web sites from appearing. If, for example, if you added the URL **msn.com** to your blacklist, you would likely experience problems accessing any of the Microsoft network of web sites (i.e. any websites that ***contain*** the text **msn.com**). So when adding new URLs to your blacklist, be as specific as possible.

Tip: How to selectively block embedded elements of web pages.

Note: The Ad Server Filter applies only to windows opened in Internet Explorer (version 5.01 or later).

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Windows System Tray

The Windows System Tray is a box normally located in the lower right corner of your screen, at the right end of the Windows Task Bar. The System Tray contains icons that let you quickly view status and access options and commands related to specific programs that are running in the background on your computer.

System Mechanic places its Popup Stopper icon in the System Tray to let you easily block popup windows on the fly without leaving your current browser window. To access the Popup Stopper menu, right click on the Popup Stopper icon in the System Tray.

Spython

Spython Help Topics

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Spython: Options

To change logging options or the location where Spython looks for its spyware (parasite) definitions:

1. On the Welcome step of the Spython wizard, select the button labeled **Options**.
2. In the dialog box that appears:
   - Check the box labeled **Log actions performed manually** if you want to have actions that you perform entered into the log.
   - Check the box labeled **Log scheduled actions** if you want to have actions that Spython performs automatically entered into the log.
3. If needed, enter a new location for the Definitions File in the field labeled **Definition file location**.
4. Select the button labeled **OK** to save the settings and return to the wizard.

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Popup Stopper: Filtering Ad Servers

You can add, remove, and edit ad servers on your Black List and White List. When enabled, this function is active in the background while you are on the Web. When you open a Web page, Popup Stopper will determine if the origin of the page (the ad server) is on the Black List or White List. If the ad server is on the Black List, then the page will not open. If the ad server is on the White List, then it will always open. If the page is open, the origin of all elements of the page, such as pictures, banners, and buttons, are also checked. If any of the origins match the Black List, then they will not load; a browser message will appear instead. This can dramatically increase Internet speed because you do not have to wait for ads to appear.

Note: The Ad Server Filter applies only to windows opened in Internet Explorer (version 5.01 or later).

Note: When an item on a Web page is blocked, a standard browser message (usually referencing a cancelled action) appears in its place. This is not an error.

The Black List

Add

The Popup Stopper has an extensive default list of servers and Internet source URLs that are blocked. Although quite comprehensive, the default list was created so as to avoid blocking any legitimate windows from appearing. If a popup window or embedded advertisement does not appear on the default ad server list, it can be added.

To add a new server to the Black List:

1. Start Popup Stopper.
2. Click **Options**.

   The **Popup Stopper Options** window appears.
4. From the **Black List** menu, select **Ad Servers**.
5. Click **Add**.

   The **Black List – Add New Server** dialog box appears.
6. Do one of the following:
   - In the box, type the name of a server or a wildcard.
   - From the list, select a server if servers appear.
7. Click **OK**.

   The server is added to the alphabetized list.
8. Click **Apply**.

You can also add a server from the **Black List** menu when you are adding **Popup Titles**.

To add a server when you are adding popup titles:

1. Start Popup Stopper.
2. Click **Options**.

   The **Popup Stopper Options** window appears.
3. From the **Black List** menu, select **Popup Titles**.
4. Click **Add**.

   The **Black List – Add New Popup Window Title Rule** dialog box appears.
5. Do one of the following:
   - In the box, type a title or a wildcard.
   - From the list, select a title if titles appear in the list.
6. Click **OK**.

   The title is added to the alphabetized list of blocked titles.
7. Click **Apply**.

Note: A source server address/URL is considered a "match" if any of the text contained within the individual ad server list items is contained within the full ad server address. For example, the ad server rule **google.com** would match the source server address **http://www.google.com**.

Remove

If you want to view a page or content that is blocked due to a match on the ad server list, you can remove those blocked servers.

To remove a server:

1. Start Popup Stopper.
2. Click **Options**.

   The **Popup Stopper Options** window appears.

3. From the **Black List** menu, select **Ad Servers**.
4. In the servers list, click a server name to highlight it.
5. Click **Remove**.
   A confirmation message appears.
6. Click **Yes**.
   The listing is removed.
7. Click **Apply**.
   You can receive content from that server again.

Note: You can also temporarily disable the entire ad server list filter within the Popup Stopper Options window, or you can right-click the Popup Stopper icon in the System Tray and select **Disable**.

Edit

You edit entries contained within your server list in order to adjust their efficacy and scope. You might find that a particular listing is too narrow in scope (allowing too many related addresses in) or too broad (causing the tool to block legitimate content). To edit a particular listing:

To edit a blocked ad server item:

1. Start Popup Stopper.
2. Click **Options**.
   The **Popup Stopper Options** window appears.
3. From the **Black List** menu, select **Ad Servers**.
4. In the servers list, click a server name to highlight it.
5. Click **Edit**.
   The **Black List – Edit Server Filter Rule** dialog box appears.
6. In the **Server URL text to filter** box, edit the text (you can type a partial URL).
7. Click **OK**.
   The edited server name appears in the list.
8. Click **Apply**.

Import

The Popup Stopper supports importing additional server lists directly into its main listing, without overwriting any of your existing entries. If the company you work for maintains a central list, or if a friend or associate has a particularly effective list that meets your needs, you might want to import it into the Ad Server List.

To import a set of titles from a Popup Stopper Title Rules List (SRL) file:

1. Start Popup Stopper.
2. Click **Options**.
   The **Popup Stopper Options** window appears.
3. From the **Black List** menu, select **Ad Servers**.
4. Click **Import**.
   The **Open** dialog box appears.
5. Browse your computer, and locate and select an SRL file.
6. Click **Open**.
7. Click **Apply**.

Note: Importing a new Ad Server List will only add new rules contained in the imported list to the existing list. No rules in your existing list are replaced, and any duplicate entries are ignored during the importation process.

Note: Importable lists must be generated using the Popup Stopper tool's export function.

Export

To export a selection of server listings or all server listings:

If you wish to export all or part of the ad server list to an SRL file for the purposes of sharing with another user or storing as backup, you may utilize the following procedure:

1. Start Popup Stopper.
2. Click **Options**.
   The **Popup Stopper Options** window appears.
3. From the **Black List** menu, select **Ad Servers**.
4. In the titles list, click the titles that you want to export to highlight them.

Note: If you are exporting all titles, then you do not need to highlight them all.

5. Do one of the following
   - To export all items, from the **Export** menu, select **Export All**
   - To export the selected items, from the **Export** menu, select **Export Selected**.
     The **Save As** dialog box appears.
6. In the **File name** box, type a file name for the file.
7. Click **Save**.

The White List

Add

When you add a server to the White List, Web pages and content from that server will always be accepted.

To add a new server to the blacklist:

1. Start Popup Stopper.
2. Click **Options**.
   The **Popup Stopper Options** window appears.
3. From the **White List** menu, select **Ad Servers**.
4. Click **Add**.
   The **White List – Add New Server** dialog box appears.
5. Do one of the following:
   - In the box, type the name of a server or a wildcard.
   - From the list, select a server if servers appear.
6. Click **OK**.
   The server is added to the alphabetized list.
7. Click **Apply**.

You can also add a server from the **White List** menu when you are adding **Popup Titles**.

To add a server when you are adding popup titles:

1. Start Popup Stopper.
2. Click **Options**.
   The **Popup Stopper Options** window appears.
3. From the **Black List** menu, select **Popup Titles**.
4. Click **Add**.
   The **White List – Add New Popup Window Title Rule** dialog box appears.
5. Do one of the following:
   - In the box, type a title or a wildcard.
   - From the list, select a title if titles appear in the list.
6. Click **OK**.
   The title is added to the alphabetized list of allowed titles.
7. Click **Apply**.

Note: A source server address/URL is considered a "match" if any of the text contained within the individual ad server list items is contained within the full ad server address. For example, the ad server rule **google.com** would match the source server address **http://www.google.com**.

Remove

You can remove a server from the White List.

To remove a server:

1. Start Popup Stopper.
2. Click **Options**.
   The **Popup Stopper Options** window appears.
3. From the **White List** menu, select **Ad Servers**.
4. In the servers list, click a server name to highlight it.
5. Click **Remove**.
   A confirmation message appears.
6. Click **Yes**.
   The listing is removed.

7. Click **Apply**.
   Content from that server is now not always accepted.

Note: You can also temporarily disable the entire ad server list filter within the Popup Stopper Options window, or you can right-click the Popup Stopper icon in the System Tray and select **Disable**.

Edit

You edit entries contained within your server list in order to adjust their efficacy and scope. You might find that a particular listing is too narrow in scope (not allowing enough addresses in) or too broad (allowing too many unwanted items).

To edit a blocked ad server item:

1. Start Popup Stopper.
2. Click **Options**.
   The **Popup Stopper Options** window appears.
3. From the **White List** menu, select **Ad Servers**.
4. In the servers list, click a server name to highlight it.
5. Click **Edit**.
   The **White List – Edit Server Filter Rule** dialog box appears.
6. In the **Server URL text to filter** box, edit the text (you can type a partial URL).
7. Click **OK**.
   The edited server name appears in the list.
8. Click **Apply**.

Import

The Popup Stopper supports importing additional server lists directly into its main listing, without overwriting any of your existing entries. If the company you work for maintains a central list, or if a friend or associate has a particularly effective list that meets your needs, you might want to import it into the Ad Server List.

To import a set of titles from a Popup Stopper Title Rules List (WSL) file:

1. Start Popup Stopper.
2. Click **Options**.
   The **Popup Stopper Options** window appears.
3. From the **White List** menu, select **Ad Servers**.
4. Click **Import**.
   The **Open** dialog box appears.
5. Browse your computer, and locate and select a WSL file.
6. Click **Open**.
7. Click **Apply**.

Note: Importing a new Ad Server List will only add new rules contained in the imported list to the existing list. No rules in your existing list are replaced, and any duplicate entries are ignored during the importation process.

Note: Importable lists must be generated using the Popup Stopper tool's export function.

Export

If you wish to export all or part of the ad server list to an WSL file for the purposes of sharing with another user or storing as backup, you can export your file.

To export a selection of server listings or all server listings:

1. Start Popup Stopper.
2. Click **Options**.
   The **Popup Stopper Options** window appears.
3. From the **White List** menu, select **Ad Servers**.
4. In the titles list, click the titles that you want to export to highlight them.
   Note: If you are exporting all titles, then you do not need to highlight them all.
5. Do one of the following
   - To export all items, from the **Export** menu, select **Export All**
   - To export the selected items, from the **Export** menu, select **Export Selected**.
     The **Save As** dialog box appears.
6. In the **File name** box, type a file name for the file.
7. Click **Save**.

Return to Popup Stopper Help Topics
Return to System Mechanic Help Topics

Popup Stopper: Filtering Popup Titles

You can filter popup titles through the Black List and the White List. The titles that you add to the Black List will always be blocked. The titles that you add to the White List will always be allowed.

The Black List

The Popup Stopper has an extensive default list of popup window titles that are blocked. Although comprehensive, the default window titles list was created with caution to avoid blocking any legitimate windows from appearing. You can add window titles to this list if they do not appear. Popup Stopper will prevent windows with the title that you added from appearing.

Add

To add a title to the Black List:

1. Start Popup Stopper.
2. Click **Options**.
   The **Popup Stopper Options** window appears.
3. From the **Black List** menu, select **Popup Titles**.
4. Click **Add**.
   The **Black List – Add New Popup Window Title Rule** dialog box appears.
5. Do one of the following:
   - In the box, type a title or a wildcard. For instance, type *Google – Microsoft Internet Explorer* for a title, or type *Google** for a wildcard, which would prevent the browser from opening any page that started with the word *Google*.
   - From the list, select a title if titles appear in the list.
6. Click **OK**.
   The title is added to the alphabetized list of blocked titles.
7. Click **Apply**.

Remove

If you're experiencing problems viewing a Web page because a title listing within the Popup Stopper matches a legitimate Web page title, you can remove that single listing.

To remove a title from the Black List:

1. Start Popup Stopper.
2. Click **Options**.
   The **Popup Stopper Options** window appears.
3. From the **Black List** menu, select **Popup Titles**.
4. In the titles list, click a title to highlight it.
5. Click **Remove**.
   A confirmation message appears.
6. Click **Yes**.
   The title is removed from the list.
7. Click **Apply**.
   Windows with that title will no longer be blocked.

Edit

The Popup Stopper also allows you to edit an existing title rule, to either broaden it through the use of a wildcard character or narrow it if it is matching legitimate page titles.

To edit a title in Black List:

1. Start Popup Stopper.
2. Click **Options**.
   The **Popup Stopper Options** window appears.
3. From the **Black List** menu, select **Popup Titles**.
4. In the titles list, click a title to highlight it.
5. Click **Edit**.
   The **Black List – Edit window title rule** dialog box appears.
6. In the **Type text you wish to block** box, edit the title. For instance, *type Google – Microsoft Internet Explorer* for a title, or type *Google** for a wildcard, which would prevent the browser from opening any page that started with the word Google.
7. Click **OK**.
   The title appears in the list.

8. Click **Apply**.
   Windows with the edited title will be blocked.

Import

System Mechanic's Popup Stopper support the option of importing additional lists of blacklisted window titles into your existing list.

To import a set of titles from a Popup Stopper Title Rules List (TRL) file:

1. Start Popup Stopper.
2. Click **Options**.
   The **Popup Stopper Options** window appears.
3. From the **Black List** menu, select **Popup Titles**.
4. Click **Import**.
   The **Open** dialog box appears.
5. Browse your computer, and locate and select a TRL file.
6. Click **Open**.
7. Click **Apply**.

Note: Importing a new Title Rules List will only add new rules contained in the imported list to the existing list. No rules in your existing list are replaced, and any duplicate entries are ignored during the importation process.

Note: Importable lists must be generated using the Popup Stopper tool's export function.

Export

You can export all or some of the blacklisted titles list to a TRL file to share with another user or to store as a backup.

To export title or titles:

1. Start Popup Stopper.
2. Click **Options**.
   The **Popup Stopper Options** window appears.
3. From the **Black List** menu, select **Popup Titles**.
4. In the titles list, click the titles that you want to export to highlight them.
   Note: If you are exporting all titles, then you do not need to highlight them all.
5. Do one of the following
   - To export all items, from the **Export** menu, select **Export All**
   - To export the selected items, from the **Export** menu, select **Export Selected**.
     The **Save As** dialog box appears.
6. In the **File name** box, type a file name for the file.
7. Click **Save**.

The White List

Add

You can add window titles to the White List. Windows with these titles will never be blocked.

To add a title to the White List:

1. Start Popup Stopper.
2. Click **Options**.
   The **Popup Stopper Options** window appears.
3. From the **White List** menu, select **Popup Titles**.
4. Click **Add**.
   The **White List – Add New Popup Window Title Rule** dialog box appears.
5. Do one of the following:
   - In the box, type a title or a wildcard. For instance, type *Google – Microsoft Internet Explorer* for a title, or type *Google** for a wildcard, which would prevent the browser from blocking any page that started with the word *Google*.
   - From the list, select a title if titles appear in the list.
6. Click **OK**.
   The title is added to the alphabetized list of allowed titles.
7. Click **Apply**.

Remove

If you no longer want a title on the White List, you can remove it.

To remove a title from the White List:

1. Start Popup Stopper.
2. Click **Options**.
   The **Popup Stopper Options** window appears.
3. From the **White List** menu, select **Popup Titles**.
4. In the titles list, click a title to highlight it.
5. Click **Remove**.
   A confirmation message appears.
6. Click **Yes**.
   The title is removed from the list.
7. Click **Apply**.
   Windows with that title will no longer always be accepted.

Edit

The Popup Stopper also allows you to edit an existing title rule, to either broaden it through the use of a wildcard character or narrow it if the title is allowing too many popups.

To edit a title in White List:

1. Start Popup Stopper.
2. Click **Options**.
   The **Popup Stopper Options** window appears.
3. From the **White List** menu, select **Popup Titles**.
4. In the titles list, click a title to highlight it.
5. Click **Edit**.
   The **White List – Edit window title rule** dialog box appears.
6. In the **Type title you wish to allow** box, edit the title. For instance, type Google – Microsoft Internet Explorer for a title, or type Google* for a wildcard, which would prevent the browser from blocking any page that started with the word Google.
7. Click **OK**.
   The edited title appears in the list.
8. Click **Apply**.
   Windows with the edited title are always allowed.

Import

System Mechanic's Popup Stopper support the option of importing additional lists of blacklisted window titles into your existing list.

To import a set of titles from a Popup Stopper Title Rules List (WRL) file:

1. Start Popup Stopper.
2. Click **Options**.
   The **Popup Stopper Options** window appears.
3. From the **White List** menu, select **Popup Titles**.
4. Click **Import**.
   The **Open** dialog box appears.
5. Browse your computer, and locate and select a TRL file.
6. Click **Open**.
7. Click **Apply**.

Note: Importing a new WRL file will only add new rules contained in the imported list to the existing list. No rules in your existing list are replaced, and any duplicate entries are ignored during the importation process.

Note: Importable lists must be generated using the Popup Stopper tool's export function.

Export

To export a selection of titles or all titles:

If you wish to export all or part of the blacklisted titles list to a WRL file for the purposes of sharing with another user or storing as backup, you may utilize the following procedure:

1. Start Popup Stopper.
2. Click **Options**.
   The **Popup Stopper Options** window appears.

3. From the **Black List** menu, select **Popup Titles**.
4. In the titles list, click the titles that you want to export to highlight them.
   Note: If you are exporting all titles, then you do not need to highlight them all.
5. Do one of the following
   - To export all items, from the **Export** menu, select **Export All**
   - To export the selected items, from the **Export** menu, select **Export Selected**.
     The **Save As** dialog box appears.
6. In the **File name** box, type a file name for the file.
7. Click **Save**.

Return to Popup Stopper Help Topics
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Spython: Downloading new definitions

It is a good idea to download new parasite definitions periodically, to ensure that your Spython wizard will be able to identify the latest threats. To download the latest definitions:

1. Ensure that your PC is connected to the Internet.
2. Within the Welcome step of the Spython tool, select the button labeled **Download new parasite definitions**.

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Spython: Starting a search

The Welcome step that appears when you first open the Spython wizard lets you access Spython options and download up-to-date parasite definitions (which Spython uses to identify parasites). The Welcome step also lets you begin your search for parasites that are currently on your system.

To start your search for parasites, select the button labeled **Next**. The Scan Options step will become visible.

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Spython: Scan Options

If you want Spython to automatically remove any parasites that it finds without further confirmation, select the button labeled **Automatically remove any found parasites without confirmation**. Be certain that you do not rely on any programs (for example, peer-to-peer filesharing programs) that may require the presence of their spyware or adware components.

If you want to see a list of the parasites found on your system before you delete them, select the button labeled **List any found parasites for inspection and removal**. If you also want to see a summary listing the number of parasites found, select the button labeled **Display parasite summary upon scan completion**.

When you are ready to scan, select the button labeled **Next**. Spython will proceed to perform an extensive system-wide search for parasites on your computer. This may take up to a minute to complete. Once the search has finished, the Parasite Removal step appears.

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Spython: Removing found parasites

When Spython completes its search for parasites, any found items will be displayed within the step labeled **Remove** in the Spython wizard.

By default Spython shows you all the parasitic software in a single list.

- To view only spyware, select the **Spyware** tab.
- To view only adware, select the **Adware** tab.
- To view only parasites that monitor your keyboard inputs, select the **Key Loggers** tab.
- To view any other parasites, select the **Miscellaneous** tab.

To remove* a parasite:

1. Select the parasite in the list.
2. Select the button labeled **Remove**.
3. Select the option labeled **Remove selected parasites**.

To remove* all parasites shown in the list:

1. Select the button labeled **Select All**.
2. Select the button labeled **Remove**.
3. Select the option labeled **Remove all displayed parasites**.

> *** Note**: Because some parasites are inextricably associated with their host applications, these applications may cease to operate properly once their associated parasite(s) have been removed. For a list of commonly associated host applications, select the corresponding "more information" link from the list of found parasites.

When you are finished, select the button labeled **Finish**.

Return to Spython Help Topics
Return to System Mechanic Help Topics

System Snapshots: Options for new snapshots

The items on the **Options** step are used to configure the way the System Snapshots tool will track the changes to your system. These items are described below:

Drives to Monitor

The area at the top of this screen displays a box that contains a list of all of the drives on your system. From this list you may choose which of the displayed drives you would like to monitor for changes. To do this, check the box to the left of the drive that you would like to include in the report.

Type of Comparison to Use

When tracking file changes, System Snapshot may use one of two comparison methods. To choose a specific method, select it. These methods are described below:

File Time comparison

File time comparison uses the last modified and last access date and time attributes of each file on your system as criteria when comparing for changes. This method is the quickest, but may not be as accurate as a full disk contents comparison (see below).

Disk contents comparison

Disk contents comparison is used to obtain information about the entire contents of your drive, which is stored and then later used as a criteria when comparing for changes. This method is slightly slower than file time comparison, but it can track a greater scope of changes.

When you are finished configuring the options on the **Comparison Options** tab, select the button labeled **Next**.

Files to Monitor

System Snapshot has the ability to track changes made to "ini" files. These type of files are used by Windows and other programs to store and retrieve configuration data and are often altered during an installation.

By default, two of Windows' major initialization files, "System.ini" and "Windows.ini", are contained in the list of files to track.

You may add and remove files in this list in the following ways:

Adding files

To add new "ini" files to the list:

1. Select the button labeled **Add File**. A window will appear allowing you to browse for the file you would like to add.
2. Select the file and then select the button labeled **OK**. The new file will be added to the list of tracked "ini" files.

Removing files

To remove an existing file from the list of "ini" files to track:

1. In the list, select the item that you would like to remove.
2. Select the button labeled **Remove**.

When you are finished configuring options, select the button labeled **Scan**.

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System Snapshots: Options for snapshot comparisons

Enter a short description in the field labeled **Report Description** on the **Options** tab. The report description is the information that will be used later to save the reported system changes. This description should be something short that will later remind you about what application or other operation the system report was generated in conjunction with.

When you are finished specifying the snapshot comparison options, select the button labeled **Report** to begin the comparison process.

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Utility Bar

Utility Bar Help Topics

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Utility Bar: Properties

From the **Utility Bar Properties** dialog box, you can configure Utility Bar docking and options. When you have completed configuring *all* properties, click **OK** to save the changes.

View the Utility Bar Properties

To view the Utility Bar properties:

1. On the System Mechanic dashboard, click the **Maintain** tab.
   The **Critical Maintenance for Continuing Reliability** page appears.
2. Click **Utility Bar**.
   The **Configure Utility Bar Options** page appears.
3. If you have not enabled the utility bar, select the **Enable the Utility Bar** check box.
4. Click **Options**.
   The **Utility Bar Properties** dialog box appears.
   From here, you can configure Utility Bar docking and options.

The Utility Bar Property Menus

Docking

From the **Docking** menu, you can set the screen location and screen settings properties.

Screen Location

To select the screen location for the Utility Bar:

1. View the Utility Bar properties.
2. From the **Docking** menu, select **Screen Location**.
3. Select one of the following: **Floating**, **Docked top**, **Docked bottom**, or **Minimized to system tray**.
4. Click **Apply**.

You can also restrict where the bar can dock.

To restrict where the bar can dock:

1. View the Utility Bar properties.
2. From the **Docking** menu, select **Screen Settings**.
3. To allow the Utility Bar to be moved around the screen, select the **Allow floating state** check box; clear the check box to restrict floating.
4. To allow the Utility Bar to be docked at the top of the screen, select the **Allow top screen dock** check box; clear the check box to restrict top screen dock.
5. To allow the Utility Bar to be docked at the bottom of the screen, select the **Allow bottom screen dock** check box; clear the check box to restrict bottom screen dock.
6. Click **Apply**.

Options

From the **Options** menu, you can configure options for tools, the Utility Bar appearance, animation, and miscellaneous items.

To select what tools appear on the Utility Bar:

1. View the Utility Bar properties.
2. From the **Options** menu, select **Visible Tools**.
3. To include a virtual tool belt on the bar that lets you launch individual tools from System Mechanic without starting the whole program, select the **System Mechanic Quick Launch Toolbelt** check box; clear the check box to exclude the tool.
4. To include memory usage information on the bar, select the **Memory Mechanic** check box; clear the check box to exclude the tool.
5. To include network traffic information on the bar, select the **Network Traffic Monitor** check box; clear the check box to exclude the tool.
6. Click **Apply**.

To change the appearance and behavior of the Utility Bar:

1. View the Utility Bar properties.
2. From the **Options** menu, select **Appearance**.
3. To keep the Utility Bar always on top of other windows and objects, select the **Always On Top** check box.

4. To hide the Utility Bar when the pointer is not positioned on the bar, select the **Auto Hide** check box.
5. To hide tool tabs on the Utility Bar when the pointer is not positioned on them, select the **Auto Hide Tool Tabs** check box.
6. Click **Apply**.

To turn configure animation:

1. View the Utility Bar properties.
2. From the **Options** menu, select **Animation**.
3. To use animation when changing Auto Hide states, select the **Use animation when changing auto-hide states** check box; clear the check box to turn off animation.
4. If animation is enabled, move the **Slide Delay** slider to the left to increase the rate at which animation updates occur; move the slider to the right to decrease the rate at which animation updates occur.
5. Click **Apply**.

To configure miscellaneous options:

1. View the Utility Bar properties.
2. From the **Options** menu, select **Options**.
3. If you want a confirmation message to appear when you close the Utility Bar, select the **Confirm toolbar shut down** check box.
4. If you want the Utility Bar to start when Windows starts, select the **Automatically load the Utility Bar when Windows** starts check box.
5. Click **Apply**.

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Remove Invalid Add/Remove Links: List items

Information about the entries is displayed to allow you to decide whether to keep them or remove them from your system.

Program Description

This column provides you with information about the program that is referenced. Most of the time this information is sufficient to allow you to identify which application was originally referenced by the entry.

Internal Name

The internal name column displays information that is "internal" to the application that is referenced. This information may shed some light on which original application is being referenced if the Program Description column is not sufficient.

Uninstaller

The Uninstaller column contains the path and filename of the original program that was to be used to uninstall the referenced entry. The path to this uninstaller program may provide you with more information about which application was originally being referenced by this entry.

Removing a Displayed Entry

If you have decided that a displayed entry is invalid, simply highlighting it and then selecting the button labeled **Remove** will delete it from the Control Panel's "Add/Remove Programs" applet display.

Opening an Entry's Location

There may be times when you would like to open (in Explorer) the folder location of a listed entry in order to inspect the contents. To open an listed item's location in Explorer, select the item listed and then select the button labeled **Open Location**. Note that if the folder location does not exist you will not be able to open it and will see a corresponding message.

Executing an Item

There may be times when you would like to manually test a listed item's validity by attempting to execute its command-line. To do this, select the item in the list and then select the button labeled **Execute Item**. If the item is invalid, no action will take place.

Viewing all vs. Only invalid items

Select the button labeled **View All** to list all of the items that Windows has stored regarding the automatic uninstallation of applications (instead of just invalid items). The button's caption will then change to **View Invalid**, and can subsequently be used to filter the list of items to only those that System Mechanic has deemed invalid.

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Removing invalid Add/Remove links

Remove Invalid Add/Remove Links Help Topics

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Licensing System Mechanic

Some common mistakes that are made when licensing System Mechanic are described below:

1. Spaces **anywhere** in the User ID or Serial Number will result in an error.

   Correct Example:

   12345-P5123-1234567890

   Incorrect Example:

   12 345 – p5 123 – 123456 7890

2. The User ID may include a "-" and a number at the end. This information is necessary.

   Correct Example:

   johndoe@domain.com-3

   Incorrect Examples:

   johndoe

   John Doe - 3

   johndoe@domain.com

   jo h nd oe @ domain .com - 3

   Note: If you purchased System Mechanic from a reseller, this User ID will not appear as an email address.

3. The only letters in the **serial number** are **S**, **P**, or **M**. Every other character is a number. The **User ID** is not case sensitive.

4. If your User ID appears as an email address, it must be the email address shown in your invoice, usually followed by a hyphen (dash) and a number. You may not substitute your current email address for the address shown in the original invoice unless you have been issued an updated User ID and corresponding serial number.

5. If after following these steps you receive a message about incorrect or invalid licensing information, **please re-check the above steps once again** to ensure that you are following them carefully. Verify that you are typing in the information **exactly** as it is shown on your invoice.

   Note: Your licensing information is unique to your purchase of this product. **Please keep this information private and safe**.

Return to System Mechanic Help Topics

Popup Stopper: Selectively blocking embedded elements of web pages

One of the most useful features of System Mechanic's Popup Stopper tool is its ability to preemptively block certain parts of a web page from loading, based on the address of the server that is hosting these elements.

Most graphical advertisements such as banners, buttons (and the like), are actually being "served" from a different source location than the website content you are viewing is. If a web page is served from a different location/address than its embedded advertising graphics, you may use the Popup Stopper tool to literally **filter out** items within a web page so that your browser actually ignores and omits the graphical advertisement items and does not display them, yet still displays the web page content in its entirety. This can **dramatically** increase the web surfing performance by eliminating the unnecessary and inordinate amount of advertising clutter that is on most popular web pages.

The key to configuring an ad server rule that addresses the graphical advertising elements of a certain web page is finding the server address on which that these elements are located. The following information is intended to assist you in this process.

Obtaining a source ad server address from within Internet Explorer

1. Locate the **graphical element** of the page you would like to filter.
2. With your mouse over the element, **right-click** to access its context menu
3. From with the context menu that appears, select the option labeled **Properties**
4. A dialog box will appear containing miscellaneous information. To the right of the **Address (URL)** text will be the graphical element's server location. Usually this address will be quite long, however, it is only necessary to obtain enough of a uniquely identifying factor so as to differentiate this ad server from any legitimate websites.

   For example, if the address/URL text contained the following information:

   http://m2.doubleclick.net/viewad/698862/210x111_BB_banner.gif

   you would only need the following text to identify the advertisement source:

   m2.doubleclick.net

5. Use your mouse or pointing device to highlight the uniquely identifying source text.
6. Right-click on the highlighted portion of the address text, and select the option labeled **Copy**.
7. Right-click on the **Popup Stopper** main system tray menu and select **Add New Rule**, and then select the option labeled **Ad Server Filter**.
8. In the server filter box, paste the copied ad server text by either pressing **Ctrl+V** on your keyboard, or by right-clicking with your mouse within the box and selecting the option labeled **Paste**.
9. Select the button labeled OK to save the new ad server rule.

To test the new rule, refresh the web page that contains the graphical element to be filtered by pressing **F5** on your keyboard, or by using the browser's **Refresh** button. If the rule has been successfully implemented, the elements that are being served from the filtered location will no longer appear in the web page as it re-loads.

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File Fragmentation

Fragmentation is the splitting of files across clusters that are not located together, forcing your computer to seek a number of different clusters in order to read a file and impairing performance.

What is RAM?

A commonly used acronym for **Random Access Memory**: The most common computer memory which can be used by programs to perform necessary tasks while the computer is on; an integrated circuit memory chip allows information to be stored or accessed in any order and all storage locations are equally accessible.

What is a CPU?

A commonly used acronym for **Central Processing Unit**: The part of a computer (a microprocessor chip) that does most of the data processing; the CPU and the memory (RAM) form the central part of a computer to which the peripherals are attached.

What is a HotKey?

A keystroke or special sequence of keystrokes typed in unison that produces a pre-defined result or action.

Examples: Ctrl+Alt+Del
Ctrl+C
Alt+Tab

Working with System Mechanic's Interface

When System Mechanic is started it presents its interface in a **Dashboard** style. System Mechanic's Dashboard is arranged in such a way as to provide the most efficient navigational capacity, while maintaining the integration of all tool components in a single-document metaphor.

The Dashboard has the following components:

Tool Category Tabs

The tool category tabs are arranged vertically along the left side of the Dashboard. They represent the various divisions of System Mechanic that contain tools relevant to each category. To investigate the collection of tools contained within a particular category, select the corresponding tab in System Mechanic's main Dashboard with your mouse.

Tool Buttons

Within each tool category are contained its relevant tool buttons. Tool buttons are access points to either:

1. The specific tool named in the button's caption, or
2. An expanded set of tools, called a Sub-Dashboard, relevant to the named button (see below).

To access a desired tool option, select it with your mouse.

Sub-Dashboards

If a tool button gives you access to a secondary set of tool buttons, you are within a **Sub-Dashboard**. Sub-dashboards operate in the same manner as the main System Mechanic **Dashboard**, except that access to the **Tool Category Tabs** is not present.

- To access a named tool from within a sub-dashboard, select its corresponding button with your mouse.
- To go back to the tool category that referred you to the sub-dashboard you are in, select the **Back Button** (see below) from the main System Mechanic dashboard, which is ubiquitously located at the upper left corner and marked with an arrow pointing left.

Moving Back

To move back to either the main dashboard or sub-dashboard, use the **Back Button** located at the upper left corner of the main System Mechanic dashboard, which is marked with an arrow pointing left.

- Selecting the Back button while within a tool will navigate back to the tool category that launched the tool.
- Selecting the Back button while within a sub-dashboard will navigate back to the main System Mechanic Dashboard.

Note that if a separate System Mechanic dialog box is visible, it must be dismissed before the Back Button will be accessible.

Closing System Mechanic

To close System Mechanic, select the button located at the upper right corner of the Dashboard that is marked with an "X".

Maximizing System Mechanic to Occupy the Full Screen

To maximize System Mechanic, select the button located at the upper right corner of the Dashboard that appears as a white box.

Minimizing (Hiding) System Mechanic While It Is Loaded

To minimize System Mechanic to the Windows taskbar, select the button located at the upper right corner of the Dashboard that appears as an underscore ("_"). To cause System Mechanic to reappear, select its corresponding button from the Windows taskbar.

Return to System Mechanic Help Topics

Undoing Actions With SafetyNet

Return to System Mechanic Help Topics

File and Disk Defragmentation: Boot Time Defragmentation

Boot time defragmentation is a function that can be configured to defragment items on your PC during the time when it is starting, before Windows is loaded. This is useful for people who would like to defragment one or more items on a system, but do not want the defragmentation process to take place while the computer is in normal Windows operation.

The Boot-time Defragmentation Manager tool is accessed by selecting the button labeled **Optimize** from the main System Mechanic dashboard, and then selecting the option labeled **Boot Time Defragmentation**.

The Boot-time Defragmentation Manager has the following options

Custom List

Adding new items

To add a new file or set of files to the list of items that will be defragmented the next time your PC starts, but before Windows has loaded:

1. Select the button labeled **Add Item(s)**.
2. Select the button labeled **Browse** in the dialog box that appears
3. Locate the file or set of files you would like to add and select them
4. Select the button labeled **Open** to add them to the list of files to be added
5. Select the defragmentation frequency (only defragment upon next restart or defragment at every restart) option using the button labeled **Options**.
6. Select the button labeled OK to close the dialog box and add the new items to the list.

You may also add new items by dragging them into the list from Windows Explorer with your mouse or pointing device.

Removing items

To remove items that are scheduled to be defragmented when your system restarts, select them in the list and then select the button labeled **Remove** and choose either **Selected Item(s)** to remove all selected items, or **All Items** to remove all items from the list.

You may also remove items by selecting them and then pressing the **Del** or **Delete** key on your keyboard.

Changing defragmentation frequency

To toggle whether selected items in the list are to be defragmented only on the next restart or indefinitely on every restart, select the items you would like to configure from the list, and then select the button labeled Tools. From the list of options, choose either:

§ **Defrag selected at each restart** to have all selected items be defragmented each time the system restarts

or

§ **Defrag selected on next restart only** to have all selected items be defragmented once, the next time the system restarts.

System Files

Under Windows NT, 2000, XP and greater, there are a special set of system files that are not able to be accessed when Windows is loaded. These system files are used constantly by the operating system and are dynamically growing and shrinking in size every day, thus usually causing extensive file fragmentation and system performance degradation. The Boot-time defragmentation process is specially designed to be able to defragment these normally inaccessible files before Windows locks them for itself. To configure system file defragmentation, use the following methods.

Enabling boot-time defragmentation for the System Registry Hives

The Registry Hives are Windows' main storage area for all configuration data on your system. They are constantly being accessed and modified and can become severely fragmented over time. Because Windows needs to access these files at all times, the performance subtraction resulting from over-fragmentation of the Registry Hives can be very significant.

To defragment your System Registry Hives, ensure that the box labeled **Defragment the Registry Hives** is checked.

Enabling boot-time defragmentation for the system Page File

The system page file is the large file that Windows uses to store its virtual memory data. Because this file grows and shrinks incessantly as you use your PC, it can become extremely fragmented very quickly. It is prudent to keep this file as congruous

as possible to avoid massive slow-downs and excessive disk access activity.

To defragment your page file, ensure that the box labeled **Defragment the system Page File** is checked.

Enabling boot-time defragmentation for the MFT

The MFT (master file table) is a large database that stores information about all of the files on your system. Because it is used so frequently by Windows, it normally encounters relatively increased levels of defragmentation that can cause Windows to spend longer searching for files to load, save, remove, or create.

To defragment your MFT, ensure that the box labeled **Defragment the MFT** is checked.

Changing system file defragmentation frequency

To change the frequency at which the selected system files are defragmented at boot time, use the options labeled **Next restart only** or **Each restart** to establish the desired configuration. See above for more information on frequency.

Return to File and Disk Defragmentation Help Topics
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Uninstalling Software Applications

Return to System Mechanic Help Topics

Uninstaller: Application Removal Using Native Uninstallers

When the Uninstaller tool initially appears, it loads the list of installed applications that are associated with a "native" or "built-in" uninstallation function. When uninstalling items from your system, it is always best to utilize their native uninstaller if one is made available.

The options available in this part of the tool are as follows:

Uninstalling a Listed Item

To start a listed item's associated uninstaller, select the item from the list and then select the button labeled **Start Selected Uninstaller**. The item's uninstallation program should begin. The complete the uninstallation process, follow the instructions provided by the application's associated uninstaller.

If an uninstallation process does not begin within a few seconds, the selected item's uninstaller may be invalid or corrupt. You may remove this item's uninstaller entry from the list by selecting the button labeled **Remove Entry**. To uninstall an item whose uninstaller is corrupt or invalid, utilize either the Uninstalling an Application Listed on your System or Manually Selecting an Application to Remove functions by selecting the button labeled **Uninstall Program Not Listed**.

Finding and Removing Invalid Uninstaller Entries

Invalid uninstaller entries may be marked with a red square. Items marked in this manner have been preliminarily determined to be corrupt, invalid, or missing the actual file or files referenced by their uninstaller entry.

- To remove any entry from the list of displayed uninstaller items, select the button labeled **Remove Entry**.
- To filter the list between only valid entries and only invalid entries, select the corresponding options from the button labeled **Filter View**.

Uninstalling an Application Not Listed

The list displayed on this step only includes applications on your system which have listed their associated uninstallers with Windows. If the application you wish to remove from your system is not listed on this screen, select the button labeled Uninstall Program Not Listed to proceed to an array of options which will allow you either select the application from a list of installed items, or manually browse for its main program file or folder.

Return to Uninstaller Help Topics
Return to System Mechanic Help Topics

Uninstaller: Introduction

System Mechanic's Uninstaller tool is designed to allow you to easily remove software from your computer. It employs a myriad of advanced techniques in order to ensure safe and thorough elimination of any application, regardless of whether the application has its own built-in uninstallation function.

Some of the benefits and features that this tool offers are as follows:

- It manages the list of applications installed on your system and can invoke their native uninstallers from a central interface
- It can detect and remove invalid uninstallation entries from the list of installed applications
- It can uninstall applications on your system that do not appear in the Windows Add/Remove Programs list
- It provides a comprehensive search and report engine that allows you to selectively inspect and configure the uninstallation process in order to ensure the greatest level of accuracy and safety

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Return to Uninstaller Help Topics
Return to System Mechanic Help Topics

Uninstaller: Uninstalling an Application Listed on your System

When you select the button labeled **Uninstall Program Not Listed** from the list of native uninstallers, a list of applications that are detected as being installed on your system will be loaded and displayed.

Selecting a Listed Application to Uninstall

To choose an item for uninstallation from the displayed list, select it with your mouse and then select the button labeled **Next** to proceed to the uninstallation options step.

Opening a Listed Item in Explorer

To open Windows Explorer to the location of an item listed, select the item with your right mouse button, and then select the option labeled **Open application location in Explorer**.

Getting a Listed Item's Properties

To open a listed item's Windows Properties dialog box, select the item with your right mouse button, and then select the option labeled **Get application properties**.

Uninstalling an Application Not Listed

If the application you wish to uninstall does not appear on the displayed list, select the button labeled **Uninstall a Different Program** to proceed to the manual application specification step.

Return to Uninstaller Help Topics
Return to System Mechanic Help Topics

Uninstaller: Manually Selecting an Application to Remove

To manually specify an application for uninstallation that does not appear in either the list of applications with associated uninstallers, or the list of installed applications, you may use the options available within the **Manually Select a Program** step as described below:

Uninstalling by Main Executable

An application's main executable file is the file that Windows uses to launch the main interface of the program. Normally this file ends with a ".exe" extension in its name and is located in the top level folder where the application is installed. If you know where the main executable file for the application you wish to remove from your system is located, you may use this option. To do so:

1. Select the option labeled **Uninstall application by main executable**
2. Select the button labeled **Browse**
3. Browse for the main executable file of the application you wish to uninstall, select it, and then select the button labeled **Open**.
4. Select the button labeled **Next** to proceed to the options step.

Uninstalling by Main Program Folder

If you know where the folder in which the application you wish to remove from your system is located you may utilize this option. This option is also helpful if the application's main executable (see above) is located in a subfolder of the main root installation folder, and you would like to include all items from a specified folder and optionally those contained within it as candidates for removal. To specify a main program folder use the following steps:

1. Select the option labeled **Uninstall application by main program folder**
2. Select the button labeled **Browse**
3. Browse for the main program folder of the application you wish to uninstall, select it, and then select the button labeled **OK**.
4. Select the button labeled **Next** to proceed to the options step.

Return to Uninstaller Help Topics
Return to System Mechanic Help Topics

Uninstaller: Configuring Uninstallation Options

Uninstallation Depth

Uninstallation depth relates to how far "down" in a hierarchical set of folder structures this tool will go when searching for items to remove. The various options are explained below.

File Based Uninstallations

Only uninstall specified application, ignoring any associated elements

Select this option if you would like the uninstallation scope to exclude items that do not specifically match the specified application's main program file name. For example, if the main program file was named "program.exe", the uninstallation scope options would only identify items that match this file's name, and would ignore any items that may match files or folders located within the folder structure where "program.exe" exists.

Uninstall specified application and all elements contained in its folder

Select this option to have the uninstallation scope apply to the main executable file as well as all items contained within its folder structure.

Include items within application's subfolders

Select this option if you would like the uninstallation scope to apply to any items located within all subfolders of the main executable file's folder.

Folder Based Uninstallations

Uninstall application components located in the specified folder

Select this option if you wish the uninstallation scope to **exclude** any items contained within subfolders below the main specified folder.

Uninstall application components located in the specified folder, as well as items located in any subfolders

Select this option if you wish the uninstallation scope to **include** any items contained within subfolders below the main specified folder.

Uninstallation Scope

Uninstallation scope defines the types of items related to the specified application that the Uninstaller will search for and optionally remove from your system. The various options are explained below.

Find registry items

Select this option if you would like to find all parts of the registry that reference the specified application and its components (see uninstallation depth).

Find shortcut items

Select this option if you would like to find all shortcuts located on your system that reference the specified application and its components (see uninstallation depth).

Find related files and folders

Select this option if you would like the specified application's main executable file as well as any associated files and folders to be included in the results of the search (see uninstallation depth).

Find entries from system configuration files

Select this option if you would like to locate and report all references to the specified application and its components that are located within system configuration files (i.e. ".ini" and ".bat" files) (see uninstallation depth).

When you are finished configuring options, select the button labeled **Next** to begin searching for items to uninstall.

Return to Uninstaller Help Topics
Return to System Mechanic Help Topics

Uninstaller: Finding and Removing Application Elements

Once the uninstallation options have been configured, selecting the button labeled **Next** will initiate a system-wide search for items associated with the specified application. Once these items have been found and organized, they will be displayed and may be worked with as follows.

Topic Contents

Uninstallation Item Categories

There are four main categories that divide an applications associated items:

Files and Folders

Select this button to view the list of files and folders that are associated with the specified application.

Opening a file or folder in Windows Explorer

To open Windows Explorer to the location of a selected file or folder:

1. Select an item from the list
2. Select the button labeled **Tools**
3. Select the option labeled **Open selected location in Windows Explorer**

Displaying a file or folder's properties dialog box

To open the Windows properties dialog box associated with an item in this list:

1. Select an item from the list
2. Select the button labeled **Tools**
3. Select the option labeled **Properties**

Registry Items

Select this button to view the list of registry locations that reference the specified application or its associated components.

Opening the Windows Registry Editor to the location of a selected item

To open the Windows Registry Editor to the key location associated with a selected item:

1. Select an item from the list
2. Select the button labeled **Tools**
3. Select the option labeled **Open selected location in Windows Registry Editor**

Shortcuts

Select this button to view the list of shortcut files that reference the specified application or its associated components.

Opening a shortcut location in Windows Explorer

To open Windows Explorer to the location of a selected shortcut file:

1. Select an item from the list
2. Select the button labeled **Tools**
3. Select the option labeled **Open shortcut location in Windows Explorer**

Opening a shortcut target location in Windows Explorer

To open Windows Explorer to the location of a selected shortcut's target file:

1. Select an item from the list
2. Select the button labeled **Tools**
3. Select the option labeled **Open shortcut target location in Windows Explorer**

Displaying a shortcut's properties dialog box

To open the Windows properties dialog box associated with a selected shortcut file:

1. Select an item from the list
2. Select the button labeled **Tools**
3. Select the option labeled **Shortcut properties**

Displaying a shortcut target's properties dialog box

To open the Windows properties dialog box associated with a selected shortcut's target file:

1. Select an item from the list
2. Select the button labeled **Tools**
3. Select the option labeled **Shortcut target properties**

Configuration

Select this button to view the list of configuration file references that relate to the specified application or its associated components.

Opening a configuration file in Windows Explorer

To open Windows Explorer to the location of a selected configuration file:

1. Select an item from the list
2. Select the button labeled **Tools**
3. Select the option labeled **Open configuration file location in Windows Explorer**

Opening a configuration file in Notepad

To open Windows Notepad with the contents of a selected configuration file displayed:

1. Select an item from the list
2. Select the button labeled **Tools**
3. Select the option labeled **Open configuration file in Notepad**

Displaying a configuration file's properties dialog box

To open the Windows properties dialog box associated with a selected configuration file:

1. Select an item from the list
2. Select the button labeled **Tools**
3. Select the option labeled **Configuration file properties**

Working With Uninstallation Categories
Marking and Unmarking items for removal
Performing the uninstallation

Marking and Unmarking Items For Removal

Items that will be removed when uninstallation commences are marked with a check. If an item has a corresponding checkmark, it will be included in any removal or uninstallation actions. If an item does not have a corresponding checkmark, it will be omitted from any uninstallation actions.

By default, all items are marked for removal.

Individually marking and unmarking items

To mark or unmark a specific item:

1. Select the corresponding item's category button
2. Locate the item within the list
3. If you would like this item to be **included** in any removal actions, ensure it **has a checkmark** next to it by selecting it's corresponding checkbox with your mouse.
   You may also select the button labeled **Edit** and then the option labeled **Mark selected item for removal**.
4. If you would like this item to be **excluded** from any removal actions, ensure it **does not have a checkmark** next to it by selecting it's corresponding checkbox with your mouse.
   You may also select the button labeled **Edit** and then the option labeled **Unmark selected item**.

Marking and unmarking all items in a displayed category

To mark or unmark all items in particular category:

1. Select the corresponding item's category button
2. If you would like all items in the displayed category list to be **included** in any removal actions, select the button labeled **Edit** and then the option labeled **Mark all items in this category for removal**.
3. If you would like all items in the displayed category list to be **excluded** from any removal actions, select the button labeled **Edit** and then the option labeled **Unmark all items in this category**.

Marking and unmarking all items in all categories

To mark or unmark all items all categories:

1. If you would like all items in all categories to be **included** in any removal actions, select the button labeled **Edit** and then the option labeled **Mark all items in all categories for removal**.
2. If you would like all items in all categories to be **excluded** from any removal actions, select the button labeled **Edit** and then the option labeled **Unmark all items in all categories**.

Available options when marking associated folder items

When toggling the marked status of the specified application's associated folder locations, it may be helpful to have this tool automatically unmark any items contained within a specified folder (or any subfolders), when this folder is unmarked. For example, if you unmarked a certain folder location, you may wish to have any items that would be located within it to be automatically unmarked as well, as opposed to manually finding and unmarking them yourself.

To automatically unmark any files and folders contained within an unmarked folder location

1. Select the button labeled **Options**
2. Select the option labeled **Automatically unmark items contained within unmarked locations**

Working With Uninstallation Categories
Marking and Unmarking items for removal
Performing the uninstallation

Performing the Uninstallation

Once all of the listed items in all categories have been inspected and marked for removal you may perform the uninstallation process as follows.

To uninstall all items contained within a displayed category

1. Select the corresponding category button to display its list of associated items
2. Select the button labeled **Remove**
3. Select the option labeled **Marked items in this section**

To uninstall all items contained within all categories

1. Select the button labeled **Remove**
2. Select the option labeled **All marked items in all sections**

The uninstallation process will commence, and the status thereof will be displayed in the area between the toolbar and the list of items. A progress meter will indicate the total advancement of the procedure, and the number of items removed will be displayed as they are processed. When the uninstallation is complete, the total number and combined size of all of the elements removed will be displayed.

Canceling the Uninstallation

To cancel the uninstallation procedure, press the **Esc** key on your keyboard.

When the uninstallation is complete, you may select the button labeled Exit to return to the main System Mechanic dashboard.

Working With Uninstallation Categories
Marking and Unmarking items for removal

Performing the uninstallation

Return to Uninstaller Help Topics
Return to System Mechanic Help Topics

Relocating Software Applications

Return to System Mechanic Help Topics

Relocater: Introduction

System Mechanic's Application Relocater tool is a helpful utility that allows you to move an application installed in one place on your system to another location on your system, such as a new drive or directory. The relocation process involves finding and moving all of the specified application's associated elements in order to make the move functionally seamless, and allow you to continue using the application as you were before, after the relocation is complete.

This tool is useful for when you desire to move programs to a new drive or partition in order to install or format a new partition or drive. It is also useful for when the drive a particular application is installed on begins to run low on space and you wish to move it to a location where more drive space is available. It is also useful for when an application is installed in a folder on a drive and you simply want to move it to another folder on the same or any other drive(s) on your PC.

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Return to System Mechanic Help Topics

Relocater: Relocating an Application Listed on your System

When System Mechanic's Relocater tool initially appears, it loads a list of all detected applications that are installed on your system.

If the application you wish to relocate appears on this list, select it, and then select the button labeled Next to proceed to the options configuration step.

If the application you want to relocate does not appear in the list of displayed items, select the button labeled **Specify Manually** in order to browse for an application manually.

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Relocater: Manually Selecting an Application to Relocate

If the application you wish to relocate does not appear in the list of installed items, you may select an item manually using the options accessible by selecting the button labeled **Specify Manually**. The process is described below.

Relocating by Main Executable

An application's main executable file is the file that Windows uses to launch the main interface of the program. Normally this file ends with a ".exe" extension in its name and is located in the top level folder where the application is installed. If you know where the main executable file for the application you wish to relocate is located, you may use this option. To do so:

1. Select the option labeled **Relocate application by main executable**
2. Select the button labeled **Browse**
3. Browse for the main executable file of the application you wish to relocate, select it, and then select the button labeled **Open**.
4. Select the button labeled **Next** to proceed to the options step.

Relocating by Main Program Folder

If you know where the folder in which the application you wish to relocate is located you may utilize this option. This option is also helpful if the application's main executable (see above) is located in a subfolder of the main root installation folder, and you would like to include all items from a specified folder and optionally those contained within it as candidates for removal. To specify a main program folder use the following steps:

1. Select the option labeled **Relocate application by main program folder**
2. Select the button labeled **Browse**
3. Browse for the main program folder of the application you wish to relocate, select it, and then select the button labeled **OK**.
4. Select the button labeled **Next** to proceed to the options step.

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Relocater: Configuring Relocation Options

Root Destination Folder

The root destination folder is the location to which the specified application will be moved. This folder location does not need to exist before relocation commences. All items within the specified application's folder will be moved into the new root destination folder, and any items contained within subfolders (see relocation depth) of the main specified application will be moved into identically named subfolders within the root destination folder.

Relocation Depth

Relocation depth relates to how far "down" in a hierarchical set of folder structures this tool will go when searching for items to relocate. The various options are explained below.

File Based Relocations

Only relocate specified application, ignoring any associated elements

Select this option if you would like the relocation scope to exclude items that do not specifically match the specified application's main program file name. For example, if the main program file was named "program.exe", the relocation scope options would only identify items that match this file's name, and would ignore any items that may match files or folders located within the folder structure where "program.exe" exists.

Relocate specified application and all elements contained in its folder

Select this option to have the relocation scope apply to the main executable file as well as all items contained within its folder structure.

Include items within application's subfolders

Select this option if you would like the relocation scope to apply to any items located within all subfolders of the main executable file's folder.

Folder Based Relocations

Relocate application components located in the specified folder

Select this option if you wish the relocation scope to **exclude** any items contained within subfolders below the main specified folder.

Relocate application components located in the specified folder, as well as items located in any subfolders

Select this option if you wish the relocation scope to **include** any items contained within subfolders below the main specified folder.

Relocation Scope

Relocation scope defines the types of items related to the specified application that the Relocater will search for and optionally relocate from your system. The various options are explained below.

Find registry items

Select this option if you would like to find all parts of the registry that reference the specified application and its components (see relocation depth).

Find shortcut items

Select this option if you would like to find all shortcuts located on your system that reference the specified application and its components (see relocation depth).

Find related files and folders

Select this option if you would like the specified application's main executable file as well as any associated files and folders to be included in the results of the search (see relocation depth).

Find entries from system configuration files

Select this option if you would like to locate and report all references to the specified application and its components that are located within system configuration files (i.e. ".ini" and ".bat" files) (see relocation depth).

When you are finished configuring options, select the button labeled **Next** to begin searching for items to relocate.

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Relocater: Finding and Relocating Application Elements

Once the relocation options have been configured, selecting the button labeled **Next** will initiate a system-wide search for items associated with the specified application. Once these items have been found and organized, they will be displayed and may be worked with as follows.

Topic Contents

Relocation Item Categories

There are four main categories that divide an applications associated items:

Files and Folders

Select this button to view the list of files and folders that are associated with the specified application.

Opening a file or folder in Windows Explorer

To open Windows Explorer to the location of a selected file or folder:

1. Select an item from the list
2. Select the button labeled **Tools**
3. Select the option labeled **Open selected location in Windows Explorer**

Displaying a file or folder's properties dialog box

To open the Windows properties dialog box associated with an item in this list:

1. Select an item from the list
2. Select the button labeled **Tools**
3. Select the option labeled **Properties**

Registry Items

Select this button to view the list of registry locations that reference the specified application or its associated components.

Opening the Windows Registry Editor to the location of a selected item

To open the Windows Registry Editor to the key location associated with a selected item:

1. Select an item from the list
2. Select the button labeled **Tools**
3. Select the option labeled **Open selected location in Windows Registry Editor**

Shortcuts

Select this button to view the list of shortcut files that reference the specified application or its associated components.

Opening a shortcut location in Windows Explorer

To open Windows Explorer to the location of a selected shortcut file:

1. Select an item from the list
2. Select the button labeled **Tools**
3. Select the option labeled **Open shortcut location in Windows Explorer**

Opening a shortcut target location in Windows Explorer

To open Windows Explorer to the location of a selected shortcut's target file:

1. Select an item from the list
2. Select the button labeled **Tools**
3. Select the option labeled **Open shortcut target location in Windows Explorer**

Displaying a shortcut's properties dialog box

To open the Windows properties dialog box associated with a selected shortcut file:

1. Select an item from the list
2. Select the button labeled **Tools**
3. Select the option labeled **Shortcut properties**

Displaying a shortcut target's properties dialog box

To open the Windows properties dialog box associated with a selected shortcut's target file:

1. Select an item from the list
2. Select the button labeled **Tools**
3. Select the option labeled **Shortcut target properties**

Configuration

Select this button to view the list of configuration file references that relate to the specified application or its associated components.

Opening a configuration file in Windows Explorer

To open Windows Explorer to the location of a selected configuration file:

1. Select an item from the list
2. Select the button labeled **Tools**
3. Select the option labeled **Open configuration file location in Windows Explorer**

Opening a configuration file in Notepad

To open Windows Notepad with the contents of a selected configuration file displayed:

1. Select an item from the list
2. Select the button labeled **Tools**
3. Select the option labeled **Open configuration file in Notepad**

Displaying a configuration file's properties dialog box

To open the Windows properties dialog box associated with a selected configuration file:

1. Select an item from the list
2. Select the button labeled **Tools**
3. Select the option labeled **Configuration file properties**

Working With Relocation Categories
Marking and Unmarking items for relocation
Performing the relocation

Marking and Unmarking Items For Relocation

Items that will be relocated when relocation commences are marked with a check. If an item has a corresponding checkmark, it will be included in any relocation actions. If an item does not have a corresponding checkmark, it will be omitted from any relocation actions.

By default, all items are marked for relocation.

Individually marking and unmarking items

To mark or unmark a specific item:

1. Select the corresponding item's category button
2. Locate the item within the list
3. If you would like this item to be **included** in any relocation actions, ensure it **has a checkmark** next to it by selecting it's corresponding checkbox with your mouse.
   You may also select the button labeled **Edit** and then the option labeled **Mark selected item for relocation**.
4. If you would like this item to be **excluded** from any relocation actions, ensure it **does not have a checkmark** next to it by selecting it's corresponding checkbox with your mouse.
   You may also select the button labeled **Edit** and then the option labeled **Unmark selected item**.

Marking and unmarking all items in a displayed category

To mark or unmark all items in particular category:

1. Select the corresponding item's category button
2. If you would like all items in the displayed category list to be **included** in any relocation actions, select the button labeled **Edit** and then the option labeled **Mark all items in this category for relocation**.
3. If you would like all items in the displayed category list to be **excluded** from any relocation actions, select the button labeled **Edit** and then the option labeled **Unmark all items in this category**.

Marking and unmarking all items in all categories

To mark or unmark all items all categories:

1. If you would like all items in all categories to be **included** in any relocation actions, select the button labeled **Edit** and then the option labeled **Mark all items in all categories for relocation**.
2. If you would like all items in all categories to be **excluded** from any relocation actions, select the button labeled **Edit** and then the option labeled **Unmark all items in all categories**.

Available options when marking associated folder items

When toggling the marked status of the specified application's associated folder locations, it may be helpful to have this tool automatically unmark any items contained within a specified folder (or any subfolders), when this folder is unmarked. For example, if you unmarked a certain folder location, you may wish to have any items that would be located within it to be automatically unmarked as well, as opposed to manually finding and unmarking them yourself.

To automatically unmark any files and folders contained within an unmarked folder location

1. Select the button labeled **Options**
2. Select the option labeled **Automatically unmark items contained within unmarked locations**

Working With Relocation Categories
Marking and Unmarking items for relocation
Performing the relocation

Performing the Relocation

Once all of the listed items in all categories have been inspected and marked for relocation you may perform the relocation process as follows.

To relocate all items contained within a displayed category

1. Select the corresponding category button to display its list of associated items
2. Select the button labeled **Relocate**
3. Select the option labeled **Marked items in this section**

To relocate all items contained within all categories

1. Select the button labeled **Relocate**
2. Select the option labeled **All marked items in all sections**

The relocation process will commence, and the status thereof will be displayed in the area between the toolbar and the list of items. A progress meter will indicate the total advancement of the procedure, and the number of items relocated will be displayed as they are processed. When the relocation is complete, the total number and combined size of all of the elements relocated will be displayed.

Canceling the Relocation

To cancel the relocation procedure, press the **Esc** key on your keyboard.

When the relocation is complete, you may select the button labeled Exit to return to the main System Mechanic dashboard.

Working With Relocation Categories
Marking and Unmarking items for relocation
Performing the relocation

Return to Relocater Help Topics
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Managing Windows startup applications

System Mechanic includes two important tools that allow you to completely manage the items that start when Windows does, in order to provide you with the highest level of performance, control, and security.

The **Startup Manager** tool is designed to list and administer all of the items that are currently configured to load each time Windows starts up. It allows you to enable and disable items, create, load, and save startup profiles, adjust startup settings on remote computers across a network, and more. For more information click here.

The **Startup Guard**™ (available on Windows NT, 2000, XP, or greater) tool gives you ultimate proactive control over your startup configuration. When activated, it detects any attempt by any application to configure a new program to load the next time Windows does. When such an attempt is intercepted, Startup Guard can handle it in a number of useful ways, such as allowing items on a white list to always be added, silently preventing items contained on a black list from ever succeeding, or prompting you for a specific and individual course of action. For more information click here.

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Controlling Startup Configuration with Startup Guard™

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Startup Guard: Introduction

Windows is designed to allow software to automatically configure itself to load whenever Windows starts. This architecture is useful and important for certain applications that need to be loaded immediately whenever Windows is running, such as antivirus software or hardware drivers. Unfortunately, many applications exploit the ability to configure themselves to automatically load, and establish this setting when not necessary. Some software that automatically loads will simply run quietly, but will always be using up precious system resources while loaded. Some software that automatically loads will display annoying banners or advertisements in order to try to sell itself or other products. Some software will even engage in hazardous or security-compromising activities such as tracking your keystrokes and sending the information somewhere else, providing a secret method of gaining remote access to your computer, or even deleting or corrupting data randomly. It can be frustrating when dealing with software that does not ask or allow you to reject its automatic startup configuration.

The **Startup Guard**™ tool gives you ultimate proactive control over your startup configuration. When activated, it detects any attempt by any application to configure a new program to load the next time Windows does. When such an attempt is intercepted, Startup Guard can handle it in a number of useful ways, such as allowing items on a white list to always be added, silently preventing items contained on a black list from ever succeeding, or prompting you for a specific and individual course of action.

Note: Startup Guard is only available under Windows NT, 2000, XP, or greater.

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Startup Guard: Starting and Activating

Loading Startup Guard

Startup Guard can be loaded using two different approaches. Once loaded, its options may be accessed.

Loading Startup Guard from System Mechanic's interface

1. Double-click on the **System Mechanic icon** located on your desktop to start System Mechanic.
2. From within System Mechanic's main dashboard, select the button labeled **Optimize**.
3. Select the button labeled **Manage Windows Startup**.
4. Select the button labeled **Startup Guard**.
5. From within the Startup Guard configuration area, select the checkbox labeled **Enable Startup Guard**.

Loading Startup Guard from System Mechanic's interface

1. Locate the System Mechanic program group by selecting **Start->Programs** from the Windows taskbar.
2. Select the program group item labeled System Mechanic **Startup Guard**

When Startup Guard is loaded, it appears in the Windows system tray as a small icon. Right-clicking this icon accesses Startup Guard's options menu. Please also note that when Startup Guard is loaded, it configures itself to start automatically with Windows.

Activating and Deactivating Startup Guard

In order for Startup Guard to intercept startup configuration changes, it must be **active**. When Startup Guard is loaded the first time, it is active by default. If Startup Guard is deactivated (disabled), all startup configuration changes will be allowed to take place without interception.

Deactivating (disabling) and Activating (enabling) Startup Guard

1. Right-click on the Startup Guard system tray icon to access its menu options
2. Depending on whether Startup Guard is currently disabled or enabled:
    a. Select the option labeled **Disable Startup Guard** to disable Startup Guard
    b. Select the option labeled **Enable Startup Guard** to enable Startup Guard

Hiding and Showing the Startup Guard Icon

If you do not wish Startup Guard's icon located in the Windows system tray to be visible when Startup Guard is loaded, you may optionally hide the icon while still benefiting from Startup Guard's protective functions.

To hide Startup Guard's Tray Icon

1. Right-click on the Startup Guard system tray icon to access its menu options
2. Select the option labeled Hide tray icon

To show Startup Guard's Tray Icon again

1. Double-click on the **System Mechanic icon** located on your desktop to start System Mechanic.
2. From within System Mechanic's main dashboard, select the button labeled **Optimize**.
3. Select the button labeled **Manage Windows Startup**.
4. Select the button labeled **Startup Guard**.
5. From within the Startup Guard configuration area, select the checkbox labeled **Show Startup Guard Icon in the System Tray**.

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Startup Guard: Editing the Black and White Lists

Startup Guard uses rules lists to administer custom settings that relate to the way it handles certain startup change interceptions. Its **Black List** contains applications that will never be allowed to configure themselves to automatically start with Windows. Its **White List** contains applications that will always be allowed to configure themselves to load with Windows.

To access Startup Manager's rules lists

1. Right-click on the Startup Guard system tray icon to access its menu options
2. Select the option labeled **Manage startup rules**

Working with Black and White Lists

Startup Manager's rules lists are divided into two similarly operating sections: A **Black List** and a **White List**, as described above.

Adding existing startup items to a list

1. Select the button labeled **Add**
2. Select the option labeled **Existing startup item**
3. Select the item(s) you wish to add to the list by selecting their corresponding **checkboxes** from the dialog box that appears, and then selecting the button labeled **Add Selected**.

Adding other files or programs to a list

1. Select the button labeled **Add**
2. Select the option labeled **Other file or program**
3. Use the dialog box that appears to specify the program, file, or text to add to the list:
    a. Type the name of the item into the edit box, or select the button labeled **Browse** to locate an existing item on your system.
    b. If Startup Guard should only apply this rule if the intercepted configuration is attempting to add an item whose text matches the text in the edit box exactly, ensure that the checkbox labeled Exact text match required is checked.
    c. Select the button labeled **OK** to add the item to the list.

Editing items within a list

1. Select the item you wish to edit
2. Select the button labeled **Edit**
3. Use the dialog box that appears (as described above) to make changes to the selected item
4. When you have completed the changes, select the button labeled **OK** to apply them.

Removing selected items from a list

1. Select the item(s) you wish to remove from the list
2. Select the button labeled **Remove**
3. Select the option labeled **Selected Item(s)**

Removing all items from a list

1. Select the button labeled Remove
2. Select the option labeled **All Item(s)**

Enabling and Disabling Lists

While individual items may be temporarily enable and disabled (as opposed to removed – see below), both the Black List and the White List may be temporarily "ignored". To disable a list temporarily, select the button labeled **Disable List**. To re-enable the list, select the button labeled **Enable List**.

Enabling and Disabling individual items within a list

When an item is initially added to a list, it is enabled and processed when Startup Guard compares a new startup change interception. To temporarily ignore an item without removing it, you may **disable** it using the following method:

1. Select the item(s) you wish to temporarily disable
2. Select the button labeled **Tools**
3. Select the button labeled **Disable selected item(s)**

To re-enable individual item(s):

1. Select the item(s) you wish to re-enable
2. Select the button labeled **Tools**
3. Select the button labeled **Enable selected item(s)**

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Startup Guard: Responding to an Intercepted Configuration Attempt

When Startup Guard intercepts an attempted change in the Windows startup configuration and the item that is going to start with Windows is not on Startup Manager's White List or Black List, it will display a dialog box with various options that allow you to flexibly deal with the attempted change in configuration. The available options are explain below.

Intercepted Configuration Information

Responsible application

The responsible application is the program that is attempting to establish the new startup configuration data. This may or may not be the program that will start up automatically if the configuration is allows to proceed.

Startup Command

This is the exact information that is being written to Windows configuration and contains the command line that will be executed by Windows next time it starts. In most cases, this information refers to a program file.

Options

Prevent this startup configuration change once

If this option is selected, Startup Guard **prevents** the new configuration from being established, but does not add a rule to its White or Black lists, and will prompt again if this same configuration attempt is made.

Accept this startup configuration change once

If this option is selected, Startup Guard **allows** the new configuration to be established, but does not add a rule to its White or Black lists, and will prompt again if this same configuration attempt is made.

Always prevent this startup configuration change

If this option is selected, Startup Guard **prevents** the new configuration from being established, and adds a new rule to its Black list so that if this configuration change is ever attempted in the future, it will be **prevented without a prompt**.

Always accept this startup configuration change

If this option is selected, Startup Guard **allows** the new configuration to be established, and adds a new rule to its White list so that if this configuration change is ever attempted in the future, it will always be **allowed without a prompt**.

Open Startup Guard options

This option opens the Startup Guard rule management options.

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SafetyNet: Introduction

By using System Mechanic, you are able to make many different changes to your system, including removing or relocating files, eliminating registry data, updating configuration information, and more. While it is prudent to only initiate such changes if you are sure about their results, there can be times when an action causes an unexpected or unwanted result. In these cases, it is desirable to reverse the action and revert to the state at which your system was before it took place.

SafetyNet is a tool in System Mechanic that keeps track of the changes made by all of the other tools, and provides a central interface that allows you to manage these actions by undoing them, or administering the archives that hold the data used to undo performed actions.

With SafetyNet, working in System Mechanic is a safe and reliable experience that results in the maximum level of system optimization, performance, and stability.

Note: Startup Guard is only available under Windows NT, 2000, XP, or greater.

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SafetyNet: Options

When SafetyNet is initially started, its interface provides a number of options. To access the general options dialog box, select the button labeled **Options** from the main SafetyNet interface. The dialog box is explained below:

Location

Enabling and disabling SafetyNet

To enable SafetyNet's functions, ensure that the checkbox labeled **Enable SafetyNet** is checked. Note that it is **highly recommended** that SafetyNet always be enabled in order to provide you with a method of reversing the actions you perform using the application.

Configuring SafetyNet's base archive location

SafetyNet stores its undo information in archive files. These files are stored on your computer in a designated location displayed in the box labeled **Base archive location**. If you would like to change the location where SafetyNet stores its archive files, either type the new location into the corresponding box, or select the **browse** button to choose a folder location on your system.

Archive Size

When performing file removal actions within System Mechanic, each removed file must be archived within the undo transaction in order to provide a method of reversing the action. Over time, the collection of transaction archives can accumulate a large number of files and require a great deal of storage space. Use the options located within this tab section to handle the administration of storage limits for SafetyNet's archives.

Establishing a maximum total archive size threshold

To instruct SafetyNet to only grow its total archive size to a certain limit, either type in a value (in megabytes) or use the arrows located next to the corresponding box to adjust the displayed value.

Configuring actions to take when the maximum threshold is reached

When the maximum threshold (see above) is reached, SafetyNet can deal with this situation in the following manners:

Ignore and continue the transaction (without storing any more undo data)

This option will instruct SafetyNet to continue with whatever transaction is taking place without storing any more undo data, and without prompting you with this information.

Abort the current transaction

This option will instruct SafetyNet to immediately stop whatever action it is performing if its archive threshold size is reached.

Prompt for confirmation

This option will instruct SafetyNet to display a dialog box when its archive threshold size is reached, prompting you for an appropriate individual course of action.

Size Management: Archive Purging

Both manual and scheduled transactions are stored in compressed archive files. Over time, the size and number of these files can grow to a point where it may be necessary to purge older archive files from the system. When a purge is requested, either manually or automatically, all archive files that are older than the configured number of days will be deleted from the system and the undo data that they hold will no longer be accessible.

Instructing SafetyNet to purge archive files older than a certain number of days

To have SafetyNet purge archive files that were created more than a certain number of days ago, you must adjust the this option by either typing the number of days into the corresponding box or using the associated arrow buttons to increase or decrease the value.

Automatically purging archive files

If you would like SafetyNet to automatically purge its archive files as specified, ensure that the checkbox labeled **Automatically purge archive files when exiting System Mechanic** is checked. If you do not wish to have archive files automatically purged, ensure that this same checkbox is not checked.

Note that if automatic purging is disabled, archive files will only be purged when you manually instruct the tool to do this.

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SafetyNet: Undoing Actions

When SafetyNet is initially started, its interface will display the list of undoable transactions on the left side of its screen. The transactions are divided into two main groups: **Manual Transactions**, and **Scheduled Transactions**, and the corresponding transactions located within each group are arranged in reference to the specific tool that was used to perform the undoable action.

Browsing Transactions

To browse a tool category's list of undoable transactions, select the "plus" sign icon next to the corresponding tool label. The list of transactions are denoted by the date and time at which they were performed. To view the list of actions that were performed within a certain transaction, select the item with the date and time that corresponds to the action you wish to investigate.

Transaction events are described in the list area at the upper left of the SafetyNet interface. Each event has a action name (i.e. "Delete registry value"), and a brief set of details that describe the specific action that took place.

Undoing Specific Actions or Events

To undo a single action that took place:

1. Locate the event using the method described above
2. Select the button labeled **Undo**
3. Select the option labeled **Selected event**

Undoing Entire Transaction Sets

To undo an entire transaction set:

1. Select the transaction using the method described above
2. Select the button labeled **Undo**
3. Select the option labeled **Entire transaction**

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SafetyNet: Purging Transactions

When SafetyNet is initially started, its interface will display the list of undoable transactions on the left side of its screen. The transactions are divided into two main groups: **Manual Transactions**, and **Scheduled Transactions**, and the corresponding transactions located within each group are arranged in reference to the specific tool that was used to perform the undoable action.

Browsing Transactions

To browse a tool category's list of undoable transactions, select the "plus" sign icon next to the corresponding tool label. The list of transactions are denoted by the date and time at which they were performed. To view the list of actions that were performed within a certain transaction, select the item with the date and time that corresponds to the action you wish to investigate.

Note: When you purge a transaction, it permanently deletes the undo information associated with the event. You will not be able to undo any of the actions that took place within this transaction once the transaction has been purged.

Purging Specific Transactions

To purge a single transaction:

1. Locate the transaction using the method described above
2. Select the button labeled **Purge**
3. Select the option labeled **Selected transaction**

Purging Old Transactions

Transactions are considered "old" if they took place more days ago than the setting within SafetyNet's options entitled **Purge archive files older than**… denotes. To purge all transactions that fall into this category:

1. Select the button labeled **Purge**
2. Select the option labeled **Old transactions**

Purging All Manual Transactions

To permanently delete all transactions located within the **Manual Transactions** group:

1. Select the button labeled **Purge**
2. Select the option labeled **All manual transactions**

Purging All Scheduled Transactions

To permanently delete all transactions located within the **Scheduled Transactions** group:

1. Select the button labeled **Purge**
2. Select the option labeled **All scheduled transactions**

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SafetyNet: Starting the Tool

To start the SafetyNet tool, use the following method:

1. Start System Mechanic by double-clicking on its corresponding **icon** on the Windows Desktop.
2. Select the button labeled **Options** from the main System Mechanic dashboard.
3. Select the button labeled **Undo Changes**.

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Startup Guard: Options

To access Startup Guard's options

1. Start the application
2. Right-click on the Startup Guard icon in the Windows System Tray and select the icon labeled Manage startup rules
3. Select the tab labeled Options from the dialog box that appears

Automatic timeout response

Startup Guard's automatic timeout response option provides a method of instructing Startup Guard to automatically handle the response to changes in your startup configuration after a certain length of time has elapsed since the configuration attempt. This is useful if your PC runs unattended and may need to automatically handle any prompts by Startup Guard so they do not unnecessarily queue.

Enabling automatic timeout responses

To enable the automatic timeout response function, ensure that the checkbox labeled **Enabled automatic timeout response** is checked.

Adjust the time to wait before automatically handling a configuration change prompt

To adjust the time (in seconds) Startup Guard waits before it will automatically respond to an attempt to change the Windows startup configuration, use the up and down arrow buttons labeled **Automatically respond to startup changes after X seconds**.

Response action type

- If you would like Startup Guard to automatically **allow** any changes to your startup configuration to take place after the designated amount of time has elapsed, select the option labeled **Allow startup change to proceed**.
- If you would like Startup Guard to automatically **prevent** allow any changes to your startup configuration to take place after the designated amount of time has elapsed, select the option labeled **Prevent startup change from proceeding**.

Select the button labeled Exit to close the options dialog box and apply the settings.

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Customizing Windows Settings: Using System Customizer

System Mechanic's **System Customizer** tool allows you to configure hidden settings and options in Windows. You can change appearance, behavior, response, security, and availability of many elements of the operating system using this tool.

When the System Customizer tools initially loads, it displays a list of customization **categories** at the left side of its window, a list of **options** associated with the currently selected category at the upper right of its window, and an area that contains the **settings** themselves at the lower right portion of its window.

Browsing the list of categories and options

Viewing options related to categories

To view options related to a category, select the category's name.

Note that some categories are divided into separate **sub-categories** that help differentiate the numerous options available. Categories that are arranges in this way have a plus ("+") symbol at the left of the category name. To expand the category and expose its sub-categories, select its associated plus ("+") symbol.

To view the options associated with any sub-category, select the sub-category's name.

Viewing and adjusting settings related to options

To view the specific setting(s) associated with an option, select the option from the list. Its corresponding setting(s) will be displayed in the lower right area of the window. To save adjusted settings:

§ Select the button labeled **Apply** to save settings without closing the System Customizer window

or

§ Select the button labeled **Exit** to save adjusted settings and close the System Customizer Window.

Loading defaults and undoing actions

To bring all of the options in a selected category back to their default state (usually the state at which they were in when Windows was first installed):

1. Select the **category** you would like to restore
2. Select the button labeled **Load Section Defaults**

To undo any settings changed at any time during the use of the System Customizer tool, use System Mechanic's SafetyNet tool.

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Completing Antivirus Licensing

To complete the licensing process for Kaspersky Antivirus, perform the following steps.

1. Return to System Mechanic 5 Professional, then select the **Update Licensing** button on the Virus Protection dashboard.
2. If the trial period for Kaspersky Antivirus has expired, the **Managing License Keys** window will appear and you may proceed to step 4. Otherwise, the **Kaspersky Antivirus Personal** window will appear.
3. Select the tab labeled **Support** located along the top of the window, then select the **License Keys** option located along the left of the window. The **License Keys** option is designated by a "key" icon.
4. From the **Managing License Keys** window, select the **Add** button.
5. The **Add Files** dialog box will appear. Select the file named **ioloSm5AntivirusLicense.key**, then select **Open**.

Kaspersky Antivirus is now licensed to receive one year of free antivirus definition updates.

Completing Antivirus Licensing

To complete the licensing process for Kaspersky Antivirus, perform the following steps.

1. Open System Mechanic 5 Professional.
2. Select the **PROTECT** button located along the left of the System Mechanic 5 Professional interface.
3. Select the option labeled **Virus Protection** from the list of options presented.
4. The **Antivirus Options** dashboard will appear. Select the **Update Antivirus Licensing** button.
5. The Update **Antivirus Licensing** dashboard will appear. Select the **Update Licensing** button.
6. If the trial period for Kaspersky Antivirus has expired, the **Managing License Keys** window will appear and you may proceed to step 8. Otherwise, the **Kaspersky Antivirus Personal** window will appear.
7. Select the tab labeled **Support** located along the top of the window, then select the **License Keys** option located along the left of the window. The **License Keys** option is designated by a "key" icon.
8. From the **Managing License Keys** window, select the **Add** button.
9. The **Add Files** dialog box will appear. Select the file named **ioloSm5AntivirusLicense.key**, then select **Open**.

Kaspersky Antivirus is now licensed to receive one year of free antivirus definition updates.

File and Disk Defragmentation: Configuring Report Options

You can configure how many and which files are included in the defragmentation tool's reports.

Important note! The more files that you include in a report, the slower the analysis process runs. To speed up the analysis process, include only the top 30 most fragmented files (the default), or do not generate a report.

You can configure options when you are using the Defragmentation Wizard.

To configure report options:

1. On the System Mechanic dashboard, click the **Optimize** tab.
   The **Optimize for Peak Performance and Speed** page appears.
2. Click **Speed Up Hard Drives**.
   The **Speed Up Hard Drives** page appears.
3. Click **Disk Defragmentation Wizard**.
   The Defragmentation Wizard appears.
4. Select a defragmentation process: **Analyze fragmentation status of system drives**, **Perform a Quick Defragmentation**, **Perform an Optimized Defragmentation**, or **Run a Defragmentation Profile**.
   Note: If you select **Run a Defragmentation Profile**, you must select a profile as well.
5. Click **Next**.
   The **Drives to be included** page appears.
6. Click the **Report Options** link.
   The **Report Options** dialog box appears.
7. Do one of the following:

To	Do this
Select the files with the most fragments	1. Select **Top most fragmented file(s)**. 2. In the box, type a number, or click the up and down arrows to increase or decrease the number. **Note**: The fewer the files that are in the report, the quicker the analysis process is. Thirty is recommended.
Select the largest fragmented files (in size)	1. Select **Top largest fragmented file(s)**. 2. In the box, type a number, or click the up and down arrows to increase or decrease the number. **Note**: The fewer the files that are in the report, the quicker the analysis process is. Thirty is recommended.
Select all fragmented files	§ Select **All fragmented files**. **Important Note!** This option can greatly increase the duration of the analysis process.
Not generate a report	§ Select **Do not generate a report**.

8. Click **OK**.
   The report options have been configured.