helpline

Q denotes XP-related question

FIX YOUR
WINDOWS XP
UPGRADE BUGS
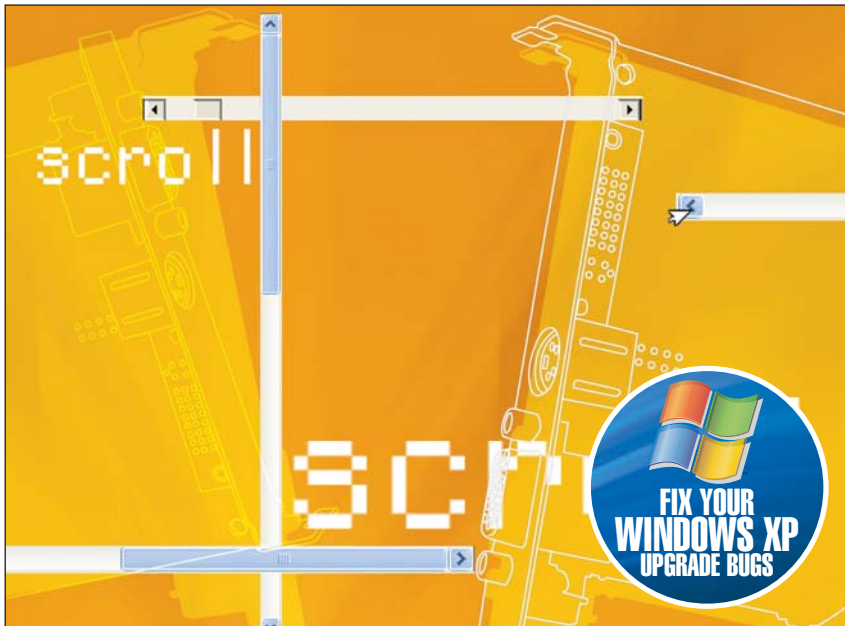
↓ General

Q **Ever since we purchased our computer it has completely frozen at unpredictable intervals. It is impossible even to do a soft reboot using Ctrl, Alt, Del. The problem often (though not always) occurs when scrolling a window. I wonder if it has anything to do with the video card, which is an nVidia GeForce2 MX.**

A If a PC locks up completely this usually means that there is a hardware conflict. Check for conflicts in Device Manager, or use the Hardware Conflict Troubleshooter. You could also try reducing the graphics acceleration. Right-click My Computer, select Properties, Performance tab, click the Graphics button and move the slider to the left. If these suggestions don't work, try moving the boards around inside the computer so that they occupy different slots.

Q **My PC runs Windows 95. Icons and toolbar buttons have recently changed to black squares, making them impossible to identify. The mouse pointer is also a black square. Could the problem**

be my graphics card? The original was replaced a few months ago with an nVidia TNT2.

A The problem is certainly related to your graphics card, but it isn't necessarily a hardware fault. These symptoms are not uncommon with graphics cards based on this chipset. They can usually be cured by updating the drivers. It is also possible that there is a conflict with some other hardware, such as a sound card, so check Device Manager for conflicts. You might also find that reducing the colour depth to 16bit solves the problem.

Q **Windows XP lacks the startup disk feature of earlier Windows versions. How do I create a bootable floppy I can use if XP fails to boot?**

A Windows 9x and Me let you create a disk you can use to start your system in case anything goes wrong with your hard drive. The startup disk boots your PC into MS-DOS and contains various diagnostic and repair tools.
Windows 2000 and XP take a different approach to booting in PC emergencies than 9x and Me do; some of their solutions don't even require a floppy. For instance, if Windows 2000 or XP hangs

while loading, simply reboot and press F8 as your PC begins. This will reload the operating system so you can see a menu of boot options (you may have to press F8 twice to get the full menu). The best option for restoring your PC is probably to select Last Known Good Configuration. If this choice doesn't work, try selecting Safe Mode. Keep in mind that your mouse won't work on this menu; you must use the keyboard's arrow keys.
However, such non-floppy restoration methods rely on Windows itself. If Windows won't even start to boot, you'll need a boot disk. Here's how to make one. Start with a blank, formatted floppy disk. It may seem counterintuitive, but this disk shouldn't be bootable. If you need to format a floppy, simply insert the disk into its drive, double-click My Computer, right-click the floppy drive icon, select Format and then click Start.
Next, open your C drive in Windows Explorer. If Explorer displays a warning, click Show the contents of this folder. To display the particular files you need, select Tools, Folder Options then click the View tab. Make sure 'Show hidden files and folders' is selected, and uncheck 'Hide protected operating system files (Recommended)'. At the warning, click Yes then ok.
Copy the files boot.ini, ntdetect.com and ntldr to your floppy. Remove the disk, open the write-protect switch in its bottom-left corner, and label the floppy Boot Disk. Return to the Folder Options dialog box and recheck 'Hide protected operating system files and folders (Recommended)'.
Place this floppy in the drive and reboot your system. Your PC will bypass the basic boot files on your hard drive, but it will otherwise load Windows normally.

Q **I have been using Nero InCD to back up files to CD-rewritable discs, but after reformatting my hard disk I can't find any files on the backup CD. Can you help?**

A Perhaps you haven't reinstalled the Nero InCD software. It needs to be present in order to read the files on the rewritable CD, not just to write to it.

Q **How do I transfer my Microsoft Outlook settings to a new PC?**

A Migrating Outlook is easier than migrating Outlook Express. You need to export only accounts, rules and folders. Accounts identify you on the internet while rules determine how you filter incoming email, among other vital functions. Important Outlook data – such as your address book, saved email messages and any calendar appointments – are in folders.
To migrate accounts, open Outlook on the old PC, select Tools, Accounts. Choose your mail account and click Export. Save the file to a shared folder or to a removable medium and click Close. To export your rules, select Tools, Rules Wizard, click the Options button, then Export Rules. Again, save this file to a shared folder or removable medium.
To export folders, select File, Import and Export on the old machine. On the first page of the Import and Export Wizard, select Export to a file (shown above right). On the next page, select Personal Folder File (PST). On the page after that, select Personal Folders, check Include subfolders

→ To migrate Outlook to a new PC, you must export and import program files
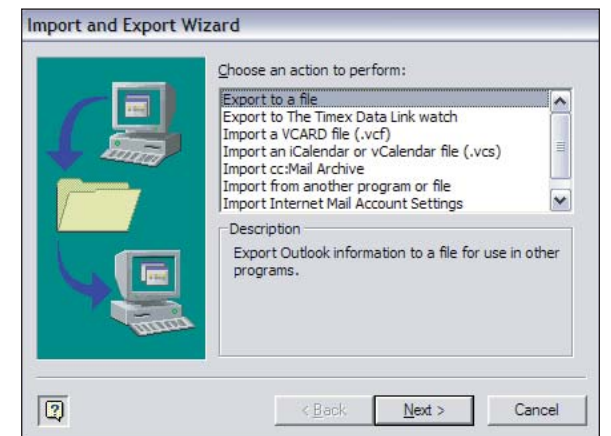
and click Next. Save the file to a shared folder or a removable medium as well.
When you move these three files to the new computer, repeat the above steps in Outlook on that machine, choosing to import rather than to export. If you get the Startup Wizard when you start Outlook on the new PC, click Cancel then Yes.
The obvious way to import your accounts is to select Tools, Accounts, click the Import button and import the file from the old PC. If you're using Office 2000, this will work. Unfortunately, you can't directly import an account in Office XP's

Outlook 2002. To do so indirectly, launch Outlook Express and select Tools, Accounts. Click the Import button and import the account file that you copied from the old computer to your shared folder or removable medium. Click Close, then close Outlook Express. Back in Outlook, select File, Import and Export. Choose Import Internet Mail Account Settings and follow the prompts.
To import your rules, select Tools, Rules Wizard, click the Options button, then the Import Rules button. Now simply import the rule from the old computer.
Importing folders works as it should in both Outlook versions. Select File, Import and Export. Choose Import from another program or file, then Next. Click Personal Folder File (PST) and Next. Import the folders file you copied from the old PC to a shared folder or a removable medium. If some of your old folders don't appear on the Outlook Bar, select View, Folder List and drag them to it.

Q **I prefer to back up my files using WinZip. However, I have trouble unzipping my backups in DOS using the command line tool PKUnZip. Files with long file or folder names appear correctly in the archive, but aren't written with the correct names to disk. Is there another tool I can use?**

A It isn't clear from your question whether you're trying to extract files from Zip archives under real MS-DOS, or a command prompt under Windows. Although they may look similar, there are important differences between the two MS-DOS environments. Real-mode DOS, such as you see when you boot from a

Add items to the Send To submenu

Send To is one of Windows' most useful features as it provides a way to open files in an application without setting up a specific association for it. It also provides a convenient way to copy files to a backup disk such as a Zip drive or CD rewriter. Just right-click the file, click Send To, then pick a target from the list. Here's how to add to the list of targets.

Click Start, then Run. Type 'sendto' in the Open box and click ok. A new window will appear showing your SendTo folder. Under Windows XP users have their own SendTo folder, so items you add here won't appear when logged in as a different user. Now right-click and drag the target drive, folder or application to the SendTo folder window. When you release the mouse button, select Create Shortcut. When the shortcut appears, right-click it, select Rename and edit the name to remove the prefix Shortcut To. The name of the shortcut is the name that will appear in the Send To menu. Changing the name won't change the actual target of the shortcut.

That's all there is to it. Next time you right-click an object and select Send To, your new item will appear on the list of targets.
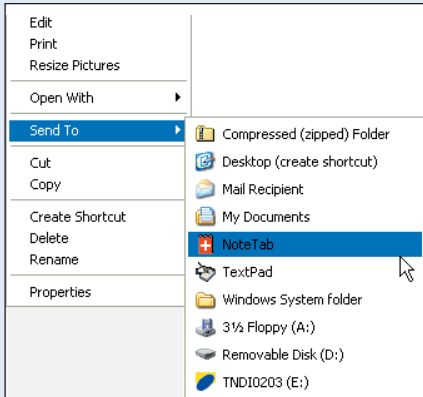
↑ Add your favourite utilities and targets to your Send To submenu

Click ok, then right-click the icon to rename the file 'Close applications'. If you wish, you can drag the icon back to the Start menu.

Kill Win has an option to close everything, but it's not very good. It just reloads Windows, skipping your autolaunching programs. It also doesn't work in XP. If you want to use it, though, follow the instructions above for creating a close-all-applications icon. However, instead of adding '/w', add /p. Finally, name the shortcut 'Close everything'.

Q I have a Mesh PC running Windows Me. Nearly every time when I switch on, it won't boot; it asks for a system disk. If I then press Ctrl, Alt, Del, it boots up perfectly. Mesh's helpline could only suggest reformatting the hard disk, which I'm loath to do. I've run Defrag and ScanDisk and checked in the Bios that drive select is set to Auto. What can I try next?

A We think that the Mesh helpline's suggested remedy is most unlikely to work. It seems clear to us that the Bios is trying to boot from the hard disk before the hard disk has completed its power-on diagnostic checks. As a result, the Bios thinks there is no hard disk in the system and asks for a system disk. By the time you hit Ctrl, Alt, Del, the hard disk is ready to go, so the system boots up normally.

It may be that there is a fault on the hard disk which is causing the diagnostics to take longer than expected. However, if all seems well once the system is running, it's far more likely that all you need to do is make the Bios a bit less eager to get booted up. Exactly how you do this depends on the options available in your Bios.

There may be a boot delay option you can set, or conversely a fast boot option you can turn off. Alternatively, there may be an option to set the order in which the Bios looks for boot disks. This may have been configured so as to try the C drive first. In normal circumstances this is a good way to have this option configured, but in your case it might be better to slow down the boot process by having the Bios try booting from the A drive or the CD-ROM first.
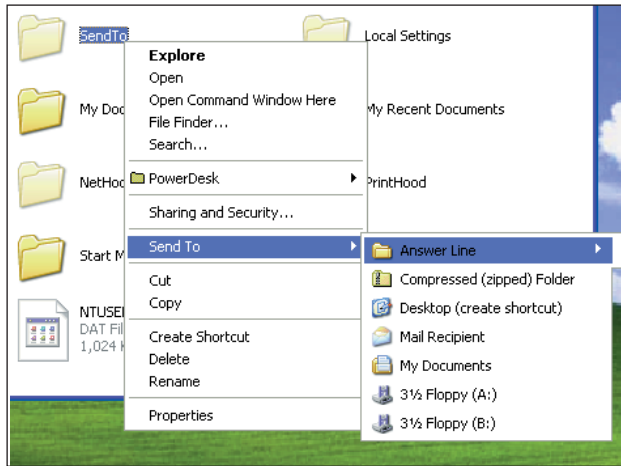
← The Send To menu is a folder holding shortcuts. The hard part is finding the folder

Q I bought two sticks of 256MB SDRAM (synchronous dynamic RAM) on Ebay. It works fine in my computer where the Bios is set to PC100 but when put in my parents' new PC, which is set to PC133, the system becomes very unstable. This suggests that the memory must be PC100, though it was advertised as PC133. There are no markings on the RAM modules. Is there a utility I can run that will tell me if it is PC133 or not?

A Unfortunately, the answer is no. To test the speed of the memory a utility would have to alter the bus timings and risk crashing the system. The only way to test if your memory is up to specification is using a memory tester – a piece of electronic equipment which only a well-equipped computer repair workshop is likely to have. Alternatively, you could look at the manufacturer's markings – it's therefore suspicious that there aren't any on your SDRAM.

It's possible that some other reason, such as incompatibility with the memory that is already there, could be causing the problem in your parents' PC. Try running it with only the memory you bought installed. If the system is still unstable, though, the most likely explanation is that this memory isn't what you expected it to be.

Q If I buy a new hard disk I would expect it to have no data on it – no zeros and no ones. After I have used the disk, I can delete files from it, or even format it, but I understand that the data is not really erased (unlike an audio or videotape) and can still be recovered. If I buy a special utility that overwrites all data with zeros, so that it cannot be recovered, the disk still won't be in the same state it was when new, will it?

A No it won't, but why would you want it to be? Actually, you are mistaken in believing that a new hard disk is completely blank. When the disk platter – the actual storage medium inside the casing – is first manufactured, it will indeed contain no data at all. But once the drive has been assembled, it is low-level formatted by the manufacturer.

In effect, what this process does is mark out where on the disk the blocks of data will go. The same process reads and writes to every block on the disk in order to detect bad sectors (blocks with flaws that prevent them from reliably storing data) and mark them as such so as they aren't used. So the disk will contain zeros and ones, though not in a structure that makes any sense to Windows or DOS.

To return a hard disk to its 'as new' state you would have to low-level format it again. However, to do that you would need a low-level format utility provided by the drive manufacturer. Such a utility might be available from the manufacturer's website, but don't bank on it.

Unnecessary low-level formatting can do more harm than good, and manufacturers generally don't want to encourage it. The only situation in which we'd advise low-level formatting a drive, presuming that a utility is available, is as a last-ditch attempt to revive a drive that seems to be beyond repair.

↓ Windows

Q Is there a way I can add programs to the Send To list that I get when I right-click a file?

A The Send To menu is simply a folder. Put a shortcut in the folder, and it will be on the menu. You can right-drag a file or folder to the Send To folder and select Create Shortcut(s) Here to put a shortcut to that item on the menu, too, as shown left.

So where is the Send To folder? In Windows 9x and Me, the folder path is c:\Windows\Sendto. In Windows 2000 and XP, the path is c:\Documents and Settings\Username\Sendto, where username is your user name for the computer. In Windows 2000, Me and XP, Send To is a hidden folder. To view hidden folders, open Windows Explorer, select Tools, Folder Options, click the View tab, select Show hidden files and folders and click ok.

It may also be useful to refer to the boxout, *Add items to the Send To submenu,* on the opposite page.

Q In September 01's Helpline on page 160 you published a tip explaining how to enable MS-DOS mode under Windows Me. I have downloaded the patch from www.geocities.com/ mfd4life_2000 and followed the instructions to the letter.

However, when the patch file starts to run it says 'Examining io.sys', then 'pattern not found' and does nothing else whatsoever. I am running Windows Me 4.90.3000 and the patch claims to have been tested on this version. Can you tell me how to get it to work, or else another way to get real MS-DOS mode on a PC running Windows Me?

A A software patch works by directly modifying (patching) a computer file. Because the position in the file of the instructions to be modified will vary between different versions, the patch has to make sure that the version it is attempting to modify is the one it was designed for. It would appear that the

floppy disk, doesn't support long filenames at all, which is why you can't even see the long names in a DIR listing. If you try to extract files with long file or folder names in that environment, they'll be written to disk with short names, no matter what archiving tool you use.

If you're using a command prompt under Windows and trying to extract the files using PKUnZip, the reason you're still getting short names is because PKUnZip was designed for real MS-DOS and consequently can't create folders or files with long names. You need to be using a 32bit command line unzipper. There isn't a 32bit version of PKUnZip as far as we are aware, so use InfoZip's UnZip, which you can download from www.info-zip.org or access from this month's cover disc.

Q How can I easily close all Windows programs before installing a new application or running ScanDisk? We're often told to close all open programs before performing some action – for example, installing a new program or defragmenting a hard drive. But which programs do you need to close?

A Some experts say you have to close only the applications that run in their own windows and then minimise to the main section of the Taskbar. Others recommend that you close everything except Windows' bare bones, including antivirus software, firewalls and other programs that run in the background. We close just the applications, and it has never caused a problem.

The easiest way to close all programs is with BK-Soft's Kill Win freeware or its $15 shareware cousin, Kill Win Pro. Both are available at www.borgking.de/ bk-soft/killwin.htm. Alternatively, access them from this month's cover disc.

To create a shortcut that will close only your applications, right-click the Kill Win icon in your Start menu and select Copy. Then right-click the desktop and select Paste. Right-click the new icon on your desktop, select Properties and choose the Shortcut tab. In the Target field, add a space and then /w to the end of the existing text, so that it reads something like this:

'c:\KillWin\KillWin.exe /w'

patch doesn't think that your io.sys is the correct version.

According to the developers' website, version 1.3 of the patch 'allows patching of non-standard versions of io.sys and command.com. This adds full compability with non-US editions of Windows Me and might also allow patching of other (future or previous) builds as well'. Unfortunately, as we aren't the developers of the patch, we have no information about it other than that provided on the site, so if you're sure that you followed the instructions to the letter we can offer no explanation.

If the patch doesn't work then there are two alternative ways to get real MS-DOS running on your computer. One is to boot to DOS using your emergency recovery disk, or a modified version of it that takes you straight to a command prompt. The other is to use a partitioning tool like PartitionMagic to create a small, dedicated MS-DOS partition and install on to it a copy of MS-DOS from an earlier version of Windows. You can then use PartitionMagic 7.0 (or a similar boot menu utility), which is on this month's cover disc, to select between MS-DOS and Windows Me at startup.

Q My PC runs Windows XP and I always use Windows Update. This week there was a critical update, along

← Use the Hardware Update Wizard to downgrade to the driver supplied on your Windows disc

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Time-stamping in Excel · TIP

It's easy to date- or time-stamp a Microsoft Excel worksheet. To insert the date, press Ctrl, semicolon (;). For the time, press Ctrl, Shift, semicolon. To stamp the time and date, press Ctrl, semicolon, spacebar, and then Ctrl, Shift, semicolon. To turn these keystrokes into a macro, select Tools, Macro, Record New Macro, give the macro a name, assign it a shortcut key combination and press ok. Insert the date and time as described above, and then press the recorder bar's stop icon. To add dates and times that update automatically, append the =today() and =now() functions to your macro.

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with a new driver for my Brother HL-1670N printer. I installed this, only to find that when I try to print in landscape mode using Microsoft Publisher XP I can only output part of the page. If I view the layout it shows in portrait mode even when set to landscape. It is also impossible to use duplex printing, which was the main reason for having this printer. I have tried reinstalling the Publisher software. Is there a way to remove the new driver?

A The problems you describe may be occurring because some of your printer settings, such as the amount of memory in the printer or the default print resolution, have changed as a result of installing the new driver. Before removing the driver, open up the driver properties,
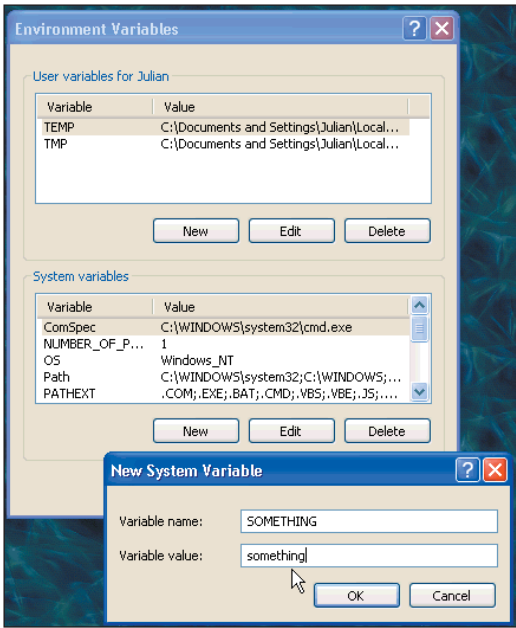
look at all the advanced settings and check that everything is set up correctly.

As you have Windows XP, the system should have created a restore point before installing the update. The simplest way to put things back the way they were before would be to click on Start, Programs, Accessories, System Tools. Run System Restore and pick a restore date that is earlier than the date on which you installed the update.

Alternatively you could open Control Panel, System, click on Device Manager, locate your printer driver, right-click it and click Properties, then click Update Driver. Choose the option to select the driver from a list, click Next, then tell the Hardware Update Wizard to look on the Windows CD for the driver (shown left). This should result in locating and installing the original driver that was supplied with Windows XP.

Q My PC's sound has stopped working – instead of the system sounds I just get a beep from the internal speaker. There is no speaker icon on the Taskbar and when I go into Multimedia Settings everything is greyed-out. I tried reinstalling the sound card, an ESS ES1868 (WDM) SoundBlaster, to no effect. What can be done?

A It's unlikely that your sound card has failed, though that is obviously a

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← Create environment variables for your DOS programs under Windows XP

possibility. It's more likely that something is preventing Windows from detecting the sound card at startup, so that its drivers aren't being loaded. That something is most likely to be a hardware conflict, probably with a DMA channel. If you installed some new hardware or drivers just before this occurred, this may provide a clue as to the cause of the trouble.

Check the sound card's hardware configuration in Device Manager. On the Resources tab, clear the 'Use automatic settings' checkbox, then go to the 'Settings based on' box and try a configuration that uses different DMA channels 0 and 1. You could also resolve the problem by going into the Bios Setup menu and changing the plug-and-play settings or the sound card configuration, assuming that your sound card is an onboard device.

Q I have just got a new computer running Windows XP but I wish to continue using a program which is DOS-based. To run this program I need to add a line to the file autoexec.bat. Where can

I find this file under Windows XP? Is it true that DOS-based programs won't run under XP?

A It isn't strictly true that MS-DOS programs won't run under Windows XP. They will run as long as they don't require any MS-DOS drivers to be present or try to access any hardware devices directly. This will rule out the possibility of running most DOS games and some other applications, but it won't prevent many simpler utilities from running.

Whether or not you can get your DOS program to work depends on exactly what change to autoexec.bat is required. The file autoexec.bat is not present under Windows XP. However, if your program simply requires an environment variable to be set up (a line in the format 'SET SOMETHING=something') then this can be achieved in a different way.

Right-click My Computer and select Properties, then select the Advanced tab. Click Environment Variables and then click New. In the New System Variable dialog box

(shown left) enter the variable name (this is what would come after the SET command in DOS) and the variable value (what would come after the equals sign). Then click ok. The new variable will then exist whenever any program is run. To verify this, just type SET at a command prompt. If you need to add a directory name to the PATH environment variable, just select PATH from the list of existing variables and click on Edit.

↓ Internet

Q My ISP's mail server is pop.tiscali. co.uk. Whenever I restart my computer this keeps changing to localhost. why is my computer doing this and how can I stop it?

A Without seeing what is running on your computer it's impossible to say, but this is probably happening for a reason. Perhaps you have a virus checker or an internet firewall installed that needs to redirect incoming mail through a local virtual server in order to check the messages you receive for viruses.

Q I have set up four Windows profiles and, within each one, an Outlook email account. Users therefore have their own PST file within the Documents and Settings folder. I intended that emails for each user's address will go to that user's own inbox. In fact, they seem to go to whichever profile is in use at the time. I have since heard that it is necessary to use Message Rules to solve the problem, but I haven't been able to work this out. Can you help?

A Message rules can't be used to move messages between different
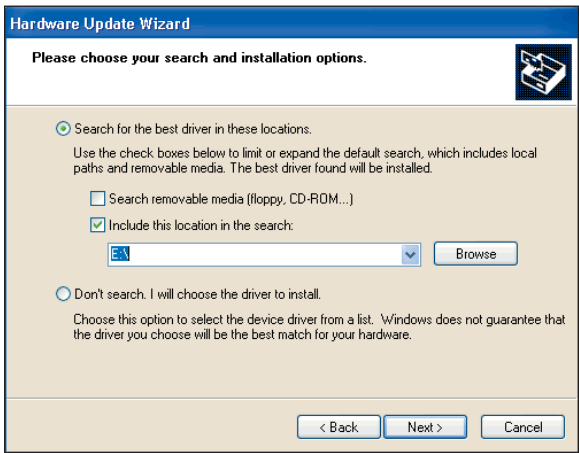
Give a CD its own icon

TIP

Have you noticed that when you load a software CD, or a *PC Advisor* cover CD, Windows displays a different icon for the drive? Would you like to give your own CDs their own icons? If so, here's how.

First, you need to choose your icon. Icon files have the file type ICO and there are plenty of places on the internet where you can download ready-made icon files: simply type 'free Windows icons' into your favourite search engine, such as Google.

If you want to have a go at designing your own icons then we recommend Snico Edit, a free (for personal use) icon editor you can download from http://home.kabelfoon. nl/~meijer/. Alternatively, access Snico Edit from this month's cover disc.

Next, use Notepad to create a text file called autorun.inf. If the icon you want to use is named mycd.ico the file should look like this:

```
[autorun]
icon=mycd.ico
```

When you burn the CD, both files – the autorun file and the icon – should go in the CD's root directory.

You can use the same technique to have a program start automatically when a CD is inserted into the drive. In this case, though, the autorun.inf file should look like the following:
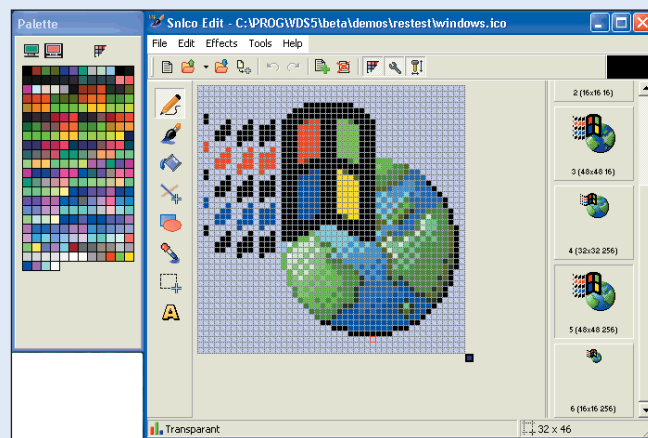
↑ Design your own icons with Snico Edit

```
[autorun]
open=mycd.exe
icon=mycd.exe,0
```

In this example, the program you want to run is called mycd.exe and the icon you want displayed on the desktop is the program's icon. You can specify a different icon file if you want to, by changing the 'icon=' line to refer to an ICO file, as in the first example. Both the program and the autorun file (and the icon, if using a separate one) must be written into the CD's root directory.

user profiles. What you need to do is to arrange things so that each user can only download their own messages. How easy that will be to achieve will depend on whether they have their own ISP mailbox or not.

The easiest solution is if each user has their own login name and password at their ISP, so their mail is already separated when they download it. It sounds as if this is not the situation in your case. Some ISPs, such as Freeserve, which allow

← Mail rules provide a crude way to allow multiple users to share an ISP mailbox
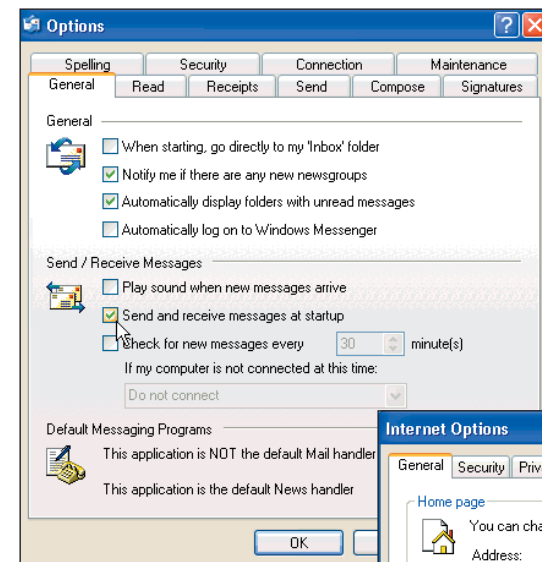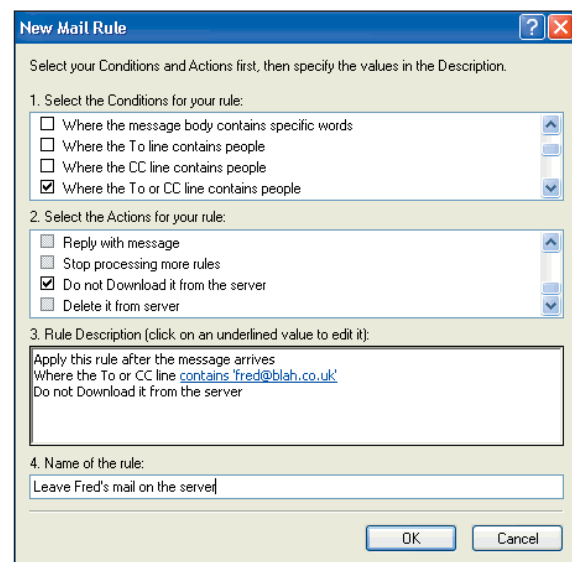
multiple email addresses on one account, provide a way for mail to specific addresses to be downloaded separately.

For example, if you usually log on to Freeserve's mail server as 'blah.fsnet.co.uk' you could change the login name to 'fred@blah.fsnet.co.uk' (using the same password) and download only messages addressed to Fred. This way of doing things is unique to Freeserve, though. Some other ISPs may offer a similar facility, but you'll have to ask them to find out if they do and, if so, how to use it.

If there's no way to filter mail for different users at the ISP, you can use mail rules to stop your users downloading other people's mail. For example, user Jim's profile could contain a rule that said: 'Where the To or Cc line contains fred@blah.co.uk do not download it from the server' (shown left).
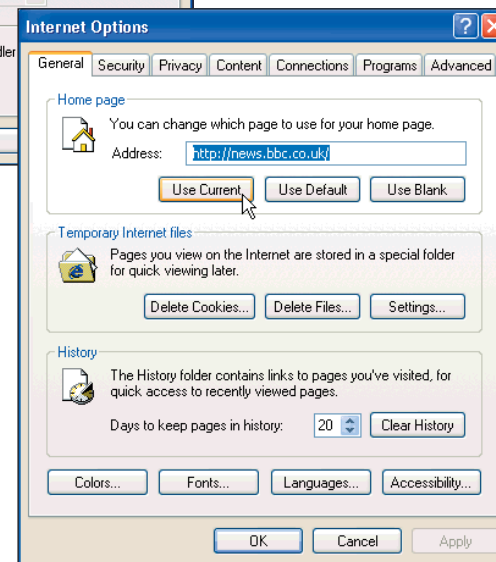
By giving each user a set of rules that leaves everyone else's mail on the server, you should more or less achieve what you

← To stop Outlook Express trying to download mail whenever you start it, clear this checkbox

↓ It's easy to change the home page in Internet Explorer

want. However, some messages (mostly bulk mailings or postings from list servers) contain the recipient's address only in a hidden part of the message called the envelope. Message rules can't process that, so such messages will still end up in the mailbox of whoever collects their mail after it arrives on the server.

If your users don't have separate mailboxes then a more satisfactory way of filtering mail is to use a local mail server like VPOP3, available on the cover disc. It's complicated to set up, but worth the effort.

Q I have just got a new computer, and Outlook Express appears to work differently to the old one. On the old one, when I started Outlook, I was given the choice of Connect, Settings and Work Offline. If I chose the latter I could compose my emails, and the program would remind me that I was offline when I pressed Send.

The new one offers me Connect, Properties and Cancel, and also displays an error message that appears to be the result of Outlook trying to download new messages without a connection. I also have to start a connection manually before I can send and receive mail. Can I make it work like the old one used to?

A Yes. The initial error message is the result of the 'Send and receive messages at startup' option being

selected. To clear this option click on Tools, Options and look on the General tab (shown above left).

If your internet connection is not starting automatically when you click on Send and Receive, open Internet Properties in the Control Panel. Select the Connections tab and check the settings. Your ISP should be shown as the default connection, and the 'Always dial my default connection' option should be selected.

Q I upgraded to Internet Explorer 6.0 using the *PC Advisor* cover disc. Now, instead of my ISP's home page appearing when I connect to the web, I get the MSN home page. How can I restore my ISP's page?

→ To hang up an Internet connection, just right-click the network icon and select Disconnect

A Navigate manually to your ISP's home page, then click on Tools, Internet Options. On the General tab, in the Home page panel, click Use Current (shown below).

Q Our PC runs Windows XP with Outlook Express 6.0. However, it doesn't hang up the connection once emails have been sent and received. We've ticked the 'Hang up after sending and receiving' box from the Options menu, and the one that appears when we select Send and Receive, without success. Clicking Work Offline doesn't achieve it either, even though the titlebar shows Working Offline. We have to close Outlook Express, click Disconnect and then open it again to read our messages offline. What should we do?

A We confess that we always hang up a connection manually as in our experience it's almost impossible to get Windows to do the right thing automatically every time. It isn't necessary to close Outlook Express to achieve this. Just right-click the Internet connection icon in the System Notification area and select Disconnect (shown below).

However, if you still want to try to get automatic disconnection to work, there are a few possibilities you may not have tried. Click Tools, Options, select the Connection tab, then click the Change button under Internet Connection Settings. On the Internet Properties dialog box, Connections tab, ensure that your ISP is shown as the default connection. Then select 'Always dial my default connection'.

Click in the list box to select your ISP, then select Settings. When the Settings dialog box comes up click the Advanced button. On the Advanced Dial-Up dialog box select 'Disconnect when connection may no longer be needed'. Once you have closed all the dialog boxes, you should find that your connection is a little more dependable.
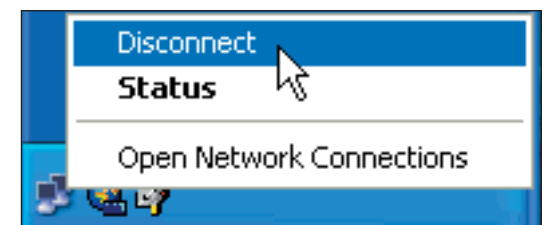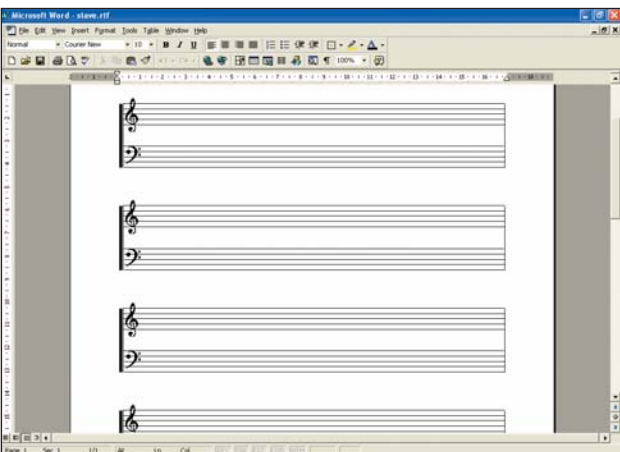
↓ Applications

Q Two months ago I downloaded Norton AntiVirus 2002 from the internet. I shall soon be replacing my PC, and wish to know how to transfer Norton to the new one. I don't have a copy on CD or disk and my old PC doesn't have a CD writer so I can't make one. As it is a recent purchase can I download it again? Symantec doesn't reply to my enquiries.

A When you purchase software online you usually download a single program file, which you then run in order to install the software. When you downloaded the file, Internet Explorer will have prompted you for a location to save it to. After installation, you should make a copy of this file in case you ever need to reinstall it for any reason.

Some products provide an evaluation version, which you can make into a full version by entering an activation code. In this case, you can usually download the latest evaluation copy of the software and re-enter the activation code. With other products, you must download the full version separately. You will usually only get access to this full version right after you have made the purchase. It is then your responsibility to protect it by taking a backup copy.

The situation is the same as if you purchased a copy of the software on disc from a retailer. Even if you provided proof of purchase, the retailer is under no obligation to provide you with a new copy of the disc if you lose or damage it.

For this reason, if you don't have a Zip drive or a CD writer it isn't a good idea to purchase software online unless the download is small enough to fit on to a floppy disk. However, there are utilities such as WinZip that will enable you to split a large file across a number of disks. This would be one way to get a copy of the file you downloaded across to your new PC.

The other way would be a PC-to-PC connection. For this you would need a special cable, often called a LapLink cable. You may be able to buy one from your local PC retailer, in which case you can use the built-in Windows Direct Cable Connection. Otherwise you will have to buy a copy of LapLink or a similar product.

All of this assumes that you still have the original file you downloaded from Symantec somewhere on your computer.

If you don't, then it's bad news. There's no way to transfer already-installed programs from one computer to another.

Some uninstaller products like Norton CleanSweep claim to be able to do this, in order to transport an application from one computer to another, but this only works with old or simple applications. An antivirus product that has been installed on Windows 95, 98 or Me cannot be transferred in this way to Windows XP – it's just impossible.

Q Do you know of some reasonably priced software that would allow me to print blank music manuscript paper using my computer?

A The only program currently available that we have come across that will do this is Sheet Music Designer from SoftWord Technology. This program will allow you to produce and print various designs and configurations of blank music manuscript sheets. It's shareware, and you can download an evaluation copy from www.simtel.net/pub/pd/55993.html.

If you just want to print blank treble and bass staves in order to write piano arrangements, we can offer you a simpler solution in the form of a Microsoft Word RTF file (shown left) which we've included on the cover CD. If you don't have Word, it should also be possible to print this file using Wordpad.

← Save money on music manuscript paper and print your own blank staves using the Word document on our cover disc

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Search PC Advisor's online Helproom

The *PC Advisor* online Helproom contains an indispensable set of answers to common questions, regarding all aspects of PC software. This ranges from general Windows issues to using specific applications and covers all types of PC hardware and software, including system components and peripherals.

Alternatively, you can ask for help from one of the visitors in our online forums. Sign up as a registered user (which is free) and then browse to one of the Discussion Forums. In the Helproom your first stop should be the searchable database of frequently asked and previously answered queries. With over a quarter of a million postings, you'll almost certainly find the answer you need in this archive of queries, simply by entering a couple of keywords.

If our online database can't solve your problem, try posting a question in our support forum, where more than 200 queries are answered every day. The forum is manned by our team of Helproom angels, who are ready and willing to lend a hand on anything from system crashes to virus alerts. Don't let the gremlins get you down – check out our Helproom instead.

👆 www.pcadvisor.co.uk/helproom

Q Our company has a small network on which we run Sage Financial Controller. We run a DOS version because we use some third-party add-in stock control modules that are only available in DOS at the moment. Our problem is that tasks which take only a few seconds when run from the server take many times longer when done from the other computers. Is there a solution?

A Not really. Your DOS accounts package has been developed using a local database management system. What this means is that the system was designed on the assumption that the data is held locally to the software, on the same computer. When this is the case, the speed of data access is limited only by the power of the processor and the speed of the hard disk. If the data is held on a remote server, all the data must be sent across the network so that the computer can process it. The network is much slower than a hard disk and creates a bottleneck. This is why tasks run from the remote computers take much longer.

Modern networked database applications use what is known as a client-server database. Here, much more intelligence is built into the database server. The user PC – the client – simply sends the server a request for some data. The server does all the processing, and sends back only the result of the search. Because of this, the power of the server is the main factor affecting performance. The amount of data sent across the network is far less, so network speed has a negligible effect on performance.

If upgrading to a client-server version of Sage isn't currently an option for you, all you can do is try to speed up your network. For example, if you're currently using 10Mbps (megabits per second) ethernet you could upgrade all the network components to 100Mbps fast ethernet.

Q Outlook Express stores each email folder as a DBX file. If I archive one of these files to a floppy, then delete the folder, how do I restore it?

A Outlook Express keeps saved emails in DBX files in a location called Store Folder. To find your Store Folder, open OE, select Tools, Options, click the Maintenance tab, then the Store Folder button. (The word 'folder' gets a little confusing here, since an Outlook Express

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Pass it on: tips from readers   **TIP**

Do you have any great workarounds or shortcuts you'd like to share? Send your tips and tricks to Helpline, *PC Advisor*, Fifth Floor, 85 Tottenham Court Road, London W1T 4TQ, or email pcadvisor_letters@idg.com. To help us sort your messages, please use the words 'Pass it on' in the subject heading.

Wrong URL
The first question in last month's Helpline, about Windows drivers for a Toshiba Satellite 3000 laptop, recommended Karl's PC Device Driver Site but gave the wrong URL. The correct website address is www.karldavis.com.

Modem problem solved
When the internal modem in Mark Dymond's Dell PC wouldn't work, he tried 'Query Modem' from the modem's Device Manager entry, which reported that it was working properly. However, some test commands sent from HyperTerminal resulted in the message No Dialtone. Mr Dymond's PC had two serial ports, both of which could be seen in Device Manager. However, the modem's properties reported that the device was assigned to COM3. The solution was to run the Add New Hardware Wizard and create an entry for COM3. Once that was there, the modem worked fine.

This tip is worth trying, but we should point out some internal modems work fine without a separate COM port entry for the port they are assigned to. Success probably depends on the model of modem and the drivers it uses.

Access 2000 and Windows XP conflict
A reader whose problem with Microsoft Access running under Windows XP was described in last month's Helpline has reported back that our diagnosis – a conflict with HP LaserJet
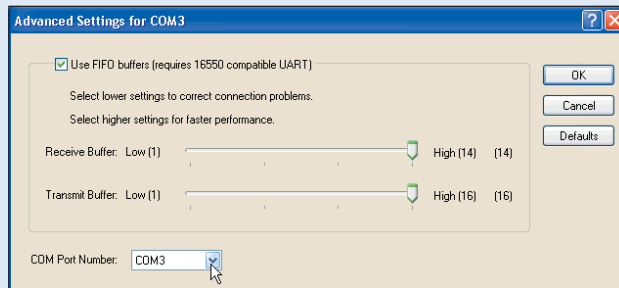
↑ If your modem doesn't work, you may need to create a COM port entry for the port it is using

printer drivers – was not correct. After eliminating the possibility of a hardware fault or incorrect software installation, supplier PC World then contacted Microsoft and was told that the company 'is aware of an issue with Access 2000 and Windows XP'. The only solution to the reported error is to rebuild the Access database under Windows XP.

Scanner success
The reader whose plea for help getting his obsolete Dexxa scanner working under Windows XP wrote to report success, after some fiddling. After downloading the driver from the address we gave, and unzipping it, our reader discovered the following steps were needed to get it working.

Right-click Setup, select Properties, then the Compatibility tab, tick the Compatibility mode box, select Windows 98/Windows Me and click ok. After installing the program using Setup, right-click the program icon and repeat the above steps, this time selecting Windows 2000 compatibility mode. After all this, the scanner should burst into life.

folder is a Windows file that resides in a Windows folder.) To archive an Outlook Express folder, go to your Store Folder and move the DBX file to a floppy, CD-R or other removable medium. Delete the folder in Outlook Express if you no longer want it.

To restore your saved email, open Outlook Express and select File, New, Folder. Give the new folder the same name as the one you're restoring (it's the archived file's name minus the DBX extension) and press Enter. Click the new, empty folder and close Outlook Express. Now copy the archived DBX file to your Store Folder. If you named the new folder properly, Windows will ask you to confirm that you want to replace the file; click Yes. The next time you re-enter Outlook, your saved email file will be there.

Q **I use Microsoft Word. When I put a page border round a document it appears correctly at the time, but when I look at it in Print Preview, or print the document, the bottom part of the border doesn't appear. The paper size is set to A4 and altering the headers, footers or margins makes no difference.**

A The page border is unaffected by these settings. By default it is set to be 24 points (about 5/16in) from the edge of the page, regardless of the size of the printable region for your printer. HP DeskJet printers are commonly affected by this problem, as the bottom edge of the printable region can be 2/3in or more from the bottom edge of the paper. The exact amount depends on the printer driver. To get the page border to fall within the printable area, try one of these workarounds.

→ Change Word's Page Border Measure from option to Text to position the border using the margin settings
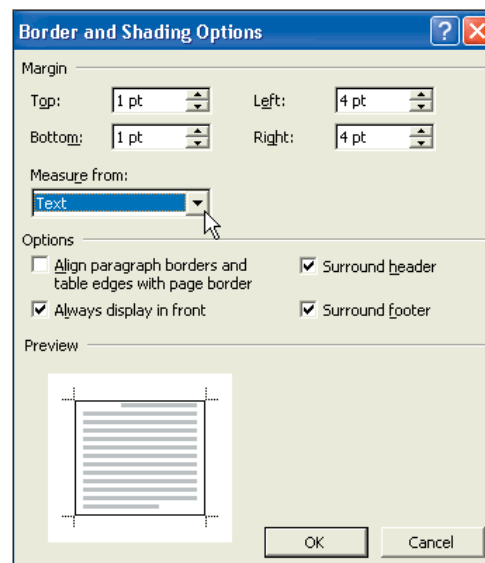
1. Border margin option Select Format, Borders and Shading. On the Page Border tab click the Options button. Increase the bottom border margin to the maximum amount. Unfortunately, the maximum is only 31 points (about 1/2in) so this may not move it up far enough to solve the problem.
2. Measure from text option Select Format, Borders and Shading. On the Page Border tab click the Options button, then change the Measure from option from Item to Text (shown above right). This fixes the page border relative to the margin settings. Use the Page Setup dialog to adjust the margin setting until you can see all of the border in Print Preview.

Q **I'm looking for advice on ready-made databases for CD collections. I'd like to include a lot of information about each of my classical CDs, apart from merely title, composer and performer.**

A If you have Microsoft Access, there is a wizard to create a CD database. It's not an ideal solution for everyone, but Access has the advantage that it is a relational programmable database, so you can add any functions and data you like. If you have even modest database or programming experience, this is a good route to a CD database with separate tables (and forms) for CDs, their tracks, artists, composers and so on. With a little effort you can make a good search form, automated mailmerge to Word for reports and cassette or CD box inserts or export to Windows' cdplayer.ini.

If databases aren't your thing, or you don't want to pay much for a package, there are loads of easy-to-use cataloguing shareware programs on the web, too. Try Organise Your Collection from www.homecraft.com or CD Trustee from www.base40.com, both of which have been recommended by PCAdvisor.co.uk forum visitors and are on this month's cover disc. Also, have a look on our Download Directory (www.pcadvisor.co.uk/downloads) where you will find a collection of organisational databases. Last month's cover CD carried a clutch of full and trial database packages too.

Another option would be to store all your albums to your hard disk as MP3s using a program such as the free MusicMatch Jukebox, available from www.musicmatch.com or this month's cover disc. MusicMatch will convert your albums to MP3s and allows you to organise them and play them like your own jukebox. ■

Contact us

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