

Registry Tweaks from CPU Magazine

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Open Folder in its own window

Most of us have Windows Explorer to open new folders in the current window, but if you want the option to open a folder in its own window, you can add it to your context menu. Click Start, Run, type **Regedit** in the Open field, and click OK. Right-click the HKEY_LOCAL_MACHINE\SOFTWARE\CLASSES\DIRECTORY\SHELL key, select New, and click Key. Name this new subkey opennew and then double-click the Default value and type **Open New &Window** in the Value Data field. Create a subkey beneath opennew named command. Double-click the Default value for the command key and type **explorer %1** in the Value Data field. Effective immediately, you'll get a new option on any folder's content menu to Open New Window.

Registry Security Hole

There's a little known security hole on most of our PCs involving the Registry Editor. By default, WinXP runs Remote Registry Editing, which lets other PCs on a network change the Registry. To plug this hole, click Start, select Settings, and click Control Panel. Next, double-click Administrative Tools, Services, and locate the Remote Registry in the right panel. Right-click the item and click Properties. In the General tab, click the Startup Type drop-down menu, select Disabled, and click OK. Reboot for the change to take effect.

Lost Send To option

Have you lost the Send To option in your right-click menu? This handy item lets you send a highlighted file to a mail recipient, a Zip folder, or even a burnable drive, but some utilities and programs make this setting disappear. To get it back on the menu, click Start, Run, and type **Regedit** in the Open field. Right-click the Registry key HKEY_CLASSES_ROOT\ALLFILESYSTEMOBJECTS\SHELLEX\CONTEXTMENUHANDLERS. Select New and Key and name this new key Send To. Double-click Default in the right pane and type **{7BA4C740-9E81-11CF-99D3-00AA004AE837}** in the Value Data box. Click OK, and the effect should be immediate.

Remove Shared Documents folder

If you don't use the Shared Documents folder in your My Computer window, you can remove it by clicking Start, Run, and typing **regedit** in the Open field. Go to the HKEY_CURRENT_USER\SOFTWARE\MICROSOFT\WINDOWS\CURRENTVERSION\POLICIES\EXPLORER key. Right-click the key, select New, and click DWORD Value. Name the new value NoSharedDocuments. Double-click the new value and type 1 in the Value Data field. Click OK, close down Regedit, and reboot Windows.

Disable AutoRun/AutoPlay

That pesky AutoRun/AutoPlay. You can try to disable it for different media types in the optical drive's Properties menu (right-click the drive letter), but we found that this doesn't stop all CDs from auto-running. Instead, open Regedit and go to HKEY_LOCAL_MACHINE\SYSTEM\CURRENTCONTROLSET\SERVICES\CDROM. Double-click AutoRun in the right window and change the Value Data from 1 to 0. (This change also prevents Windows from notifying you when a new CD is inserted.)

Navigate Regedit

Try these shortcuts to easily navigate Regedit. Highlight a subkey and press the asterisk key (*) on your numeric keypad to open all branches and sub-branches. Use the minus key (-) on the number pad to collapse all subkeys. If you're at the top of the Regedit tree (My Computer) with a mass of subkey branches open beneath, press the minus key to close all the subkeys. Don't use the asterisk key at any top-level keys because this opens every subkey in Regedit and may crash the program. If you need to close down branches quickly and start at the top, press and hold the left arrow key.

Restore All Programs List

Restoring your All Programs list in the Start menu to alphabetical order is a simple matter of deleting a Registry key. Go to HKEY_CURRENT_USER\SOFTWARE\MICROSOFT\WINDOWS\CURRENTVERSION\EXPLORER\MENUORDER and delete the subkey Start Menu2. After reboot, the Registry rebuilds this key and restores All Programs to alpha order.

Identify Third-Party Services

The Processes tab of the Windows Task Manager reveals all of the active services that Windows is running in background, but it's often hard to tell which of these is vital to Windows' functioning and which are installed by third-party software. The easy way to see the difference is to open the much-ignored System Configuration Utility. Click Start, select Run, type **msconfig** in the Open field, and click OK. Next, click the Service tab and check the box labeled Hide All Microsoft Services, and the list will show only third-party services running in background.

Thwart Super Snoops

Password protect everything you like, but Windows still maintains a quiet record of your activities in the Page File. Windows uses the Page File to swap programs and data out of memory in order to make room for other active data. Enterprising snoops might be able to open the Page File and see some of your recent work. To prevent this, use a Registry switch that makes Windows clear the Page File at shutdown.

Go to
HKEY_LOCAL_MACHINE\SYSTEM\CURRENTCONTROLSET\CONTROL
\SESSION MANAGER\MEMORY MANAGEMENT. Double-click the Value Name
ClearPageFileAtShutdown, and change the Value Data to 1. The shutdown
procedure may take longer, as Windows deletes the Page File data before
powering down.

Lock Down Display Settings

If you administer several office PCs, or you're just a draconian keeper of the family PC, you may want to prevent users from changing their screen resolutions or digging into the details of your monitor and video card settings. This Registry tweak hides the Settings tab in the Display Properties window to make all resolution and monitor settings inaccessible.

In Regedit, go to
HKEY_CURRENT_USER\SOFTWARE\MICROSOFT\WINDOWS
\CURRENTVERSION\POLICIES. Right-click the key and choose New and Key
to create a new key, and name it System. With the new System key highlighted,
right-click and choose New and DWORD Value. Name the value
NoDispSettingsPage. Double-click this new value and set the Value data to 1 to
remove the Settings tab from the Display Properties window. The effect will be
immediate. You can restore the Settings tab either by deleting this
NoDispSettingsPage value or setting the value data to 0.

Suppress That System Tray

If you are tired of long strings of icons across your Taskbar from the System Tray, you can hide them altogether. In Regedit, go to HKEY_CURRENT_USER\SOFTWARE\MICROSOFT\WINDOWS\CURRENTVERSION\POLICIES\EXPLORER. In the Edit menu, select New and DWORD Value. Name the new Value NoTrayItems-Display. Double-click the new item and give it a Value of 1. Reboot to see it take effect or simply use the WinXP tip to relaunch Explorer and the Registry with the new settings. Your System Tray will now only contain the system clock. To restore your tray icons, return to the NoTrayItemsDisplay Value and change the Value to 0 or eliminate the Value.