

Chapter 8

Organizing Your Disk

Getting Organized

As you work with your computer you will accumulate many programs, and you will generate many data files with each program.

You will need a way to locate your files when you need them, so you will need to organize them.

Windows XP lets you create folders (subdirectories) for storing related files.

Organizing a Hard Disk

Installing Windows XP creates folders:

1. Windows (WinNT) - used for OS.
2. Program Files - installing programs.
3. Documents and Settings - holds user system preferences.
4. My Documents - default folder for data files.

Integrated programs (suites) provide tools for common types of work.

1. Word processing program.
2. Spreadsheet program.
3. Database program.
4. Presentation software.
5. Other related tools.

Additional programs must be installed on hard disk before use.

1. **Critical programs that should be purchased/downloaded**
- virus checking programs (Norton AntiVirus) and file compression utility such as Win Zip.
2. Other programs that meet individual needs.

An installation program -

- Creates folder/folders for application program being installed.
- Copies files from CD-ROM to named folders.
- Compressed files need to be uncompressed before installation begins.
- Usually makes entries in Windows XP Registry.
 - Adds program names to menus.
 - Registers file extensions.

Need to control where programs are installed:

- If directions not given to installation program, then program determines names of folders and where files/folders will be located.
- Microsoft programs install program folders under Program Files folder.
- Other programs install program folders/files to root directory.

Since the root directory can hold a limited number of files, you must use folders to organize your hard disk.

1. FAT file system - using 1.44 MB Floppy Disk
 - Limited to 224 entries.
2. FAT 16 file system -
 - Hard disk capacity of 512 entries.
 - Get message disk full if all files located in root directory.
3. FAT 32 file system -
 - Hard disk capacity of 65,535 entries.
 - Scrolling through 65,535 entries - difficult to find file.
4. NTFS file system does not have these limitations.

Most programs install to C:\Program Files subdirectory

- Others install directly to C:\
- Can choose own installation program - Problem if asking for technical support - they assume software installed to setup program's default directory.

Where should you place data files?

1. Do **NOT** place data files in program folders.
 - Program files do not change.
 - Data files change as add/delete information.
 - Copying/backing up/moving data files difficult - search folders to find data files.
2. Rationale for folders - categorize information
 - *Data files contain information.*
 - *Program files contain instructions.*

Creating meaningful names for data files part of the organizational scheme.

1. Naming conventions.
 - Help identify what file contains.
 - Requires knowledge of how application program works.
 - WXP - limits file name to 255 characters.
2. Long file names problematic in WXP.
 - Limitations of root directory table - File name limited to 255 characters; includes path name, folder name is part of file name.
 - Difficult to browse files in Explorer.
 - Older applications - Older programs use 8.3 file naming rule. WXP creates MS-DOS alias for long file name. Give long file names only in Explorer/My Computer. Cannot save long file name.
 - Errors in keying in names.
 - Difficult to remember naming strategy.
3. Many utility programs will not work with long file names.

4. The following don't like spaces (allowed characters): some utility programs, Internet, WXP.
5. Similar file names problematic in creating meaningful names.
6. Data files used in conjunction with different programs can be a nightmare.
 - Data could be in 2 places. (Word processing/database folders)
 - Locating data files difficult.
7. Need organizational scheme with logic behind it.
8. **Organize hard disk by the way you work, not by the application package (the tool).**
 - Efficient organizational scheme.
 - Easier to save/locate/backup/add/delete data files.
 - Easier to add/delete program files.

Methods of Organizing a Hard Disk

Think about how the user works.

Plan organization of the hard disk.

WHAT IS A GOOD ORGANIZATIONAL SCHEME FOR ONE USER MAY NOT WORK FOR ANOTHER.

Guidelines for efficient/logical organization of hard disk.

1. The root directory should be a map to the rest of the disk. Look at the root directory as an index or table of contents. Ideally, when you execute Explorer, you should be able to see all the folders on Drive C without scrolling.
2. Plan the organization of your hard disk.
3. Create as many folders and subfolders as you need **before** copying files into folders and subfolders.
4. Keep folders names short but descriptive.
5. Avoid placing data files in the same folder as program files.

6. Create shallow/wide folders, NOT compact/deep folders.
7. Create many small folders with few files in each, NOT a large folder with many files.
 - Rule of thumb - should be able to see all files in a folder without scrolling.
 - Folder with 1 or 2 files - combine with another folder.
8. If application software installed on computer, CANNOT/MUST NOT rename/move program/program support files. Can create/delete folders for data files. No risk in moving/copying/deleting data files.
9. When installing new software/new hard disk, create separate folder containing all application software you will be using. XP encourages this with folder called Program Files.
10. Before installing program: Read directions. Where will folder and files be placed?
11. Before installing applications: Read installation directions. May be able to choose where programs are installed. Choose what to name program. Think how applications might be grouped.
12. Learn how to use and then use application package.
13. Develop naming convention for files/folders.
14. Analyze working style.
15. Analyze environment.

2 major considerations for any organizational scheme:

1. How do you work?
2. How do your programs work?

Organizing Files

Logically organize files/folders.

Able to quickly see what is on disk.

A New Model

Organizing disk allows for efficiency.

1. Organizing data - want easy access to data.
 - Will revise, copy, backup, and perform other tasks on date.
 - Easy access to data cuts out unnecessary steps (opening program/locating specific data file).
2. Organizing programs is more complex.
 - If installing for the first time, follow steps outlined previously in chapter (Section 8.3).
 - Previously installed programs presents problem for organizing disk. Move existing program - may not work properly or may not work at all.
3. When new program is installed - Registry is updated.
 - Registry is key for the path of program and location of all support files.
 - Move existing program - Registry not updated. Registry has old information. Registry can not locate program files. Program will not run.
4. To solve above problem:
 - Edit Registry - **which is not recommended**, as any error and computer will not boot.
 - Uninstall and reinstall program - most programs have uninstall routine. Can use WXP Add/Remove Program utility. Time consuming process.
5. Recommend:
 - Leave existing program organization as is on computer.
 - Use organizational criteria when installing new programs.
 - Organize data files.
 - Use shortcuts for program files.

Taskbar and Start Menu Options

Altering menu location/changing names of installed programs is a risky business.

Can access programs from Start Menu -

- Most frequently used list.
- All Programs menu - consists of shortcuts.

Can tailor Start menu to meet individual needs.

- Can view menus either cascading or by scrolling.
- Menu displayed in columns - increases number of columns to accommodate number of programs that you have.
- Scrolling - only one column.

Customizing the Start Menu

Can pin links (shortcuts) to programs on Start Menu.

Rearrange pinned programs - drag them into preferred order.

Can delete items.

Sort menus by name.

Add items to menus by drag/drop operation.

Toolbars

Icons used to launch common tasks.

Quick Launch toolbar placed on taskbar when WXP installed.

- Provides icons for: Internet Explorer (Microsoft's Web Browser), Windows Media Player.

WXP provides built-in toolbars that can be activated/deactivated.

- Address - same as Address Bar in Windows Explorer. Used to key in Internet address. Key in location of file/folder.
- Links - shortcuts to selected Internet sites.
- Desktop - places objects on desktop on taskbar.

Can create toolbars.

Can customize size and position of toolbars on taskbar.

Can anchor toolbars to edge of desktop or float them on desktop.