

Windows XP Tricks

Changing Drive Letters in Windows XP

When you add drives to your computer, such as an extra hard drive, a CD drive, or a storage device that corresponds to a drive, Windows automatically assigns letters to the drives. However, this assignment might not suit your system; for example, you might have mapped a network drive to the same letter that Windows assigns to a new drive.

When you want to change drive letters, follow these steps:

- Right-click MY COMPUTER, and then click MANAGE.
- Under COMPUTER MANAGEMENT, click DISK MANAGEMENT. In the right pane, you'll see your drives listed. CD-ROM drives are listed at the bottom of the pane.
- Right-click the drive or device you want to change, and then click CHANGE DRIVE LETTER AND PATHS.
- Click CHANGE, click ASSIGN the following drive letter, click the drive letter you want to assign, and then click OK.

You will not be able to change the boot or system drive letter in this manner. Many MS-DOS-based and Windows-based programs make references to a specific drive letter (for example, environment variables). If you modify the drive letter, these programs may not function correctly.

Lock your Desktop

Press the Windows key and the L key (WinKey+L) at the same time.

Custom Mouse Pointers

You can easily change the default Windows XP mouse pointers to something much more interesting. First, open the Control Panel by clicking START | CONTROL PANEL. Click the "Printers and Other Hardware" icon, then click "Mouse." In the Mouse PROPERTIES window that appears, click the POINTERS tab. In the area under where it says "Scheme," choose a pointer scheme from the drop-down list. Click OK to make the change effective (or click Apply to test it out first).

Download Java Update

In many ways, the ongoing legal problems between Microsoft and its competitors, along with the various governments in the world, have had little impact on the day-to-day use of Windows. With Windows XP, however, there is at least one glaring exception to this.

Windows XP will not ship with the latest version of Java, which means that in order for many Java-enabled apps to run properly, you will need to update your OS right out of the box. The best way to do this is probably by going to www.java.com. Click on the button called "Get It Now" and follow the instructions for downloading the Java update.