

# Intermediate Windows XP

## Lesson 1

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### Lesson 1 — Configuring Windows XP

#### *Introduction*

Windows XP is a successor to previous Windows systems. It comes in two versions: XP Home and XP Pro. This course addresses the Home edition as it is the one most likely installed on home computers. The Pro version includes more sophisticated networking and other features primarily aimed at the business market. However, all subjects covered here are applicable to the Pro version as well.

#### *“New” Features*

Many features of XP will be familiar to users of predecessor versions, but it does feature a somewhat different user interface. Some of the new aspects of XP are:

- A new look to the user interface including the introduction of Task Panes.

- Significantly improved stability — fewer, if any, “crashes” compared to its predecessors.
- Multi-user support.
- Faster boot up.
- Newly updated versions of Internet Explorer and Outlook Express.
- Enhanced security features including a built-in firewall.
- Lots of new on-line help support.

### **Course Materials**

Lesson materials will be furnished to you on a self-loading CD. Please return the CD to the Computer Lab at your next lesson. Your instructor will demonstrate how to install and use the CD materials.

*NOTE 1: Throughout these lessons new terms that you need to understand are shown in **boldfaced italics**.*

### **The Welcome Screen**

After the computer boots up you are presented with the Welcome Screen where users must “**logon**” to gain access to the computer. In most cases there will be only one user; however, XP is a multi-user system and you can setup “**user accounts**” for any number of users. Each user account is displayed on the welcome screen, and clicking on the desired account will load that person’s unique settings. Each account may, or may not, require a password.

The **Administrator Account** is the primary user account on each XP machine. If you have only one account on your logon screen it is the Administrator. You can add or remove other user accounts at any time from the Administrator Account. The accounts can be set up with “Administrator” privileges or “Limited.” **Limited Accounts** cannot access password protected user files and they have other limitations as well. The “Student” accounts on the lab computers are all the limited type.

If you and/or your spouse are the only users on your computer, then you probably only need one administrator account, and it probably doesn’t need to be password protected. However, if you let other people use your computer (grandkids for example), it would be a very good idea to password protect your administrator account and then open the built-in Guest account (or create

another limited account) for use by others. This prohibits others from accessing any of your files, and it puts limits on their ability to download and install files that may unknowingly contain mischievous content.

### ***The Desktop***

The first screen displayed after logging in is the “**Desktop**”. Most desktops have a colorful background that can be changed to suit you. Other features such as text size and background colors for standard windows and icons may also be set along with screen savers, monitor resolution, etc.

### **The Task Bar**

At the bottom of the screen is the **Task Bar**. It has a Start button at the left end and a clock at the right end. Next to the clock may be several small icons in the **Notification Area**. Most of these are associated with service programs that are loaded when the computer starts and run in the background, e.g. antivirus or printer status programs that continuously monitor operations. If enabled, a **Quick Launch** toolbar appears next to the Start button. It can have icons with the same functions as those on the desktop, but they remain visible even when the screen is full, so you can start another program without reverting to the desktop or using the Start/All Programs feature.

When you start a program a **Task Button** appears in the central portion of the Task Bar. Windows is a multi-tasking operating system, so you can have several tasks, or programs, running at the same time. Each one will have a task button shown on the task bar.

### ***Exercise 1 — Logging On, Checking & Configuring XP***

In this exercise we will concentrate on how to setup or configure your computer. Recommended setups are included based on your instructor’s experience; however, you can change your home computers as desired

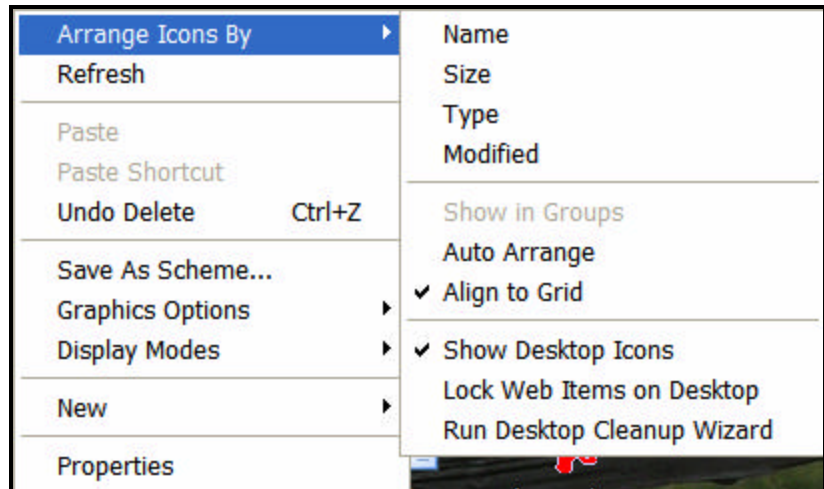
### **Logon**

Click on “Student” to logon as a student user. This is a limited account, so you cannot access the account setup feature of XP. However, when on your home computer you can open the User Accounts window. Here you can create, modify and delete various user accounts with or without password protection. It is highly recommended that you password protect the administrator account. However; REMEMBER the password — write it down and put it in a secure place.

## Configuring the Desktop

The Desktop is a very personal thing, and there is a multitude of ways to configure it. We will make some suggestions here regarding setup of your desktop and related features, but they are only our recommendations — you can set them up any way you please.

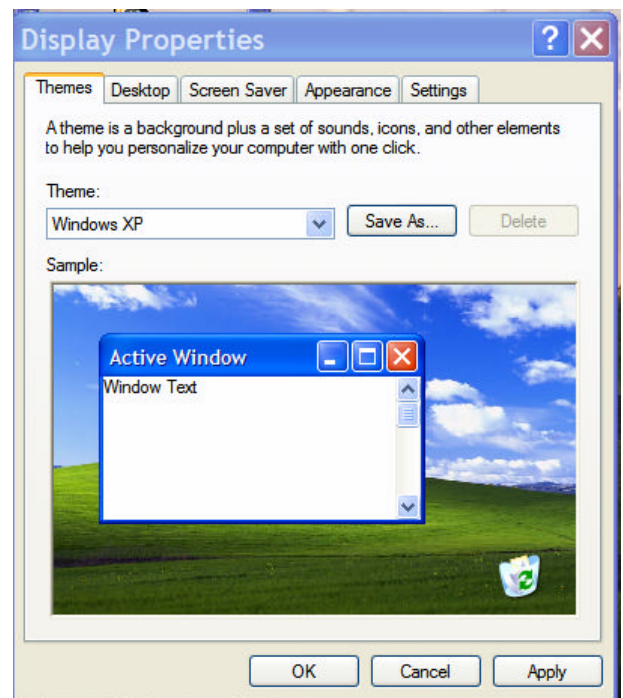
Your instructor will demonstrate how to create, delete, and arrange desktop icons. You can practice at your leisure. Next, right-click anywhere on an unused part of the desktop. This opens up a **context sensitive** menu, which is a menu containing items applicable to the place where you clicked. Clicking on a menu item that has a small



black arrow at the right edge will bring up another sub-menu as shown in the illustration above after clicking on Arrange Icons By. Check marks next to a menu item indicate that they have been selected. Clicking on them will toggle the check marks on and off. The recommended options are shown in the illustration.

Next, click on Properties to open the Display Properties **dialog box**, i.e. a “window” where you carry on a dialog with your computer. In this case you can give the computer instructions as to how you want your desktop and various windows configured.

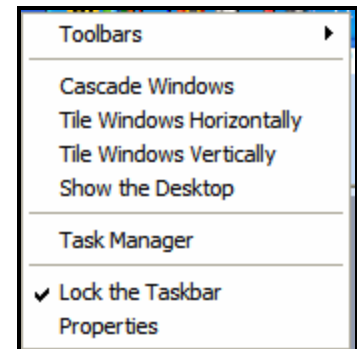
You can select the desktop background, the screen saver, the style and colors of your XP windows and the resolution of your monitor. You can also specify the font size used in various windows. Those with eye problems may want to select the larger fonts.



Your instructor will demonstrate the various settings controlled with this dialog box. When through, click on OK to exit the dialog box.

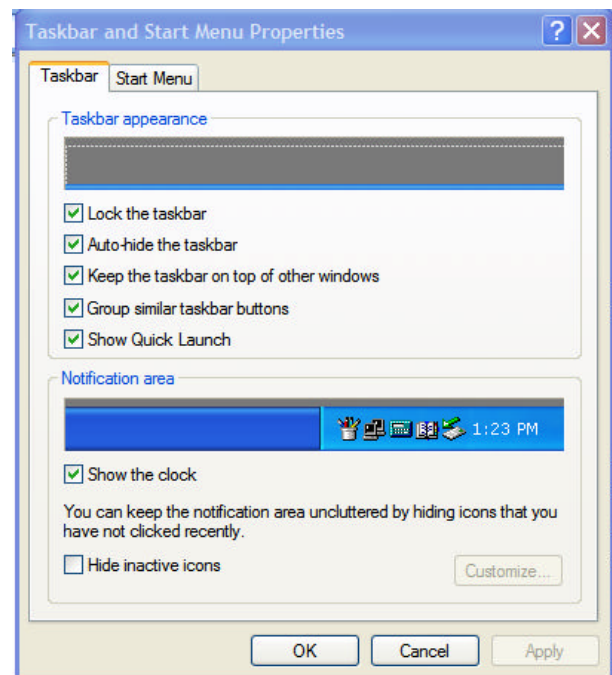
## Task Bar

Right-click somewhere in the empty part of the task bar to bring up the context sensitive menu illustrated here. If a check mark appears next to Lock the Toolbar, click on it to remove the lock. Now, try dragging the task bar to the top of the display. (This is known as **docking** the task bar). You can also drag it to either side. Return it to the bottom, open the menu again and click on Lock the Toolbar to prevent it from being moved in the future.



Open the menu again and click on Properties. Here you can select several features of the task bar and the Start menu. Recommended selections are illustrated here. Auto-hide will hide the task bar until you move the mouse to the bottom edge of the screen (assuming you have the task bar located at the bottom). This leaves more room on the screen for other applications. If you do not want the "Auto-hide" feature then uncheck the box and the task bar will always appear on the screen.

Click on the Start Menu tab and select "Classic View" if you would like your displays to revert to the Windows 98 style.



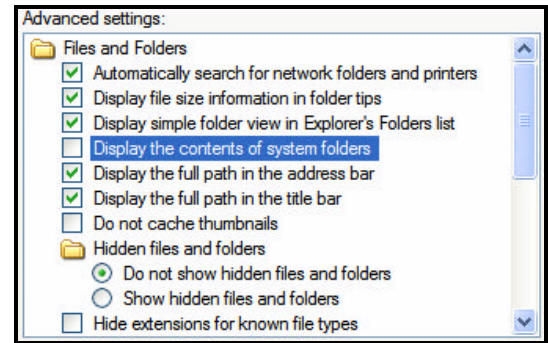
## Folder Options

There are several options available regarding the way file folders and files are displayed. Click on My Computer or My Documents to open these windows. At the **Menu Bar** click on Tools and select Folder Options. This opens the "General" tab on the Folder Options dialog box. These are the normal default settings for XP that include using the "double click" mode for opening items.

You may select the “single click” mode if desired or if you have troubles double clicking fast enough. The differences are:

**Double Click** — requires two quick clicks on an item (a file, an icon, or a program selection) to open it. One click **selects** (highlights) an item and you can then open it by pressing the Enter key.

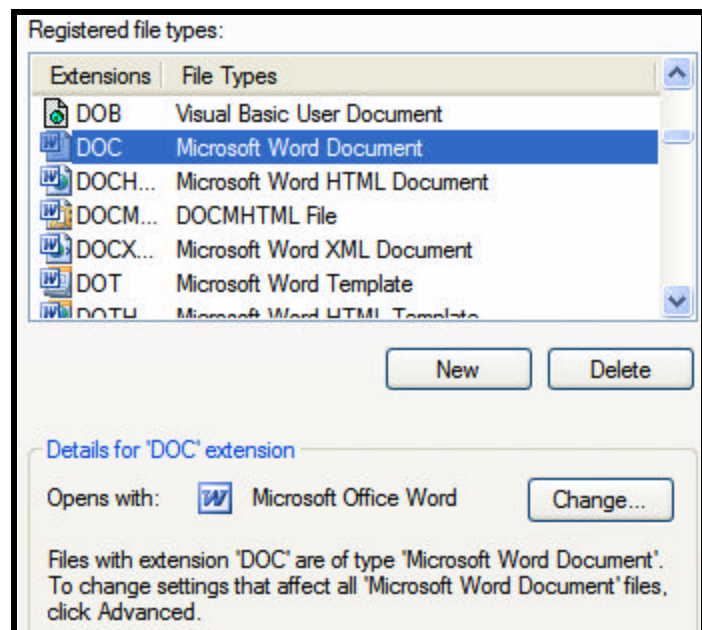
**Single Click** — requires only one click to open an item. **Hovering**, or pointing, the mouse on an object selects it. Once selected you can open it by pressing the Enter key. With the default underline option shown you will find that all the icon text on your desktop is underlined in a manner similar to that used with Internet browser programs. Also, when you move the mouse pointer over such an underlined icon, the pointer changes from an arrow to a hand object. This lets you know that the object is a link (often referred to as a **hyperlink**) or pointer to a program or file. A single click will take you wherever the link is pointing.



Click on the View tab.

Recommended settings are displayed below. Make sure that the “Hide extensions ...” box is not checked. It is often important to know what type of file you are working with, and the file extension reveals the type. (More on files will be covered in a later lesson.) Click on the “Apply to all folders” button.

Click on the “File Types” tab to open this dialog box. You may already be aware that the computer somehow “knows” which program to use when you open a file. For example, when you click (double click) on a Word file, the computer “knows” to open the Word program and then open and display the selected document. When you save a file the computer tacks a **file extension** on the end of the file name. For example, when you save a Word



file with the name “Letter to Jane” the computer automatically adds the “.doc” extension, so the actual name becomes “Letter to Jane.doc”. The next time you click on “Letter to Jane” the computer associates the .doc extension with the Word program. These **file associations** are set up in the File Types dialog box illustrated here.

Notice in the “Details ..” section that files with the DOC extension are associated with (opens with) Microsoft Office Word. The association can be changed by clicking on the Change button. This will open up a menu listing all of the programs installed on your computer. Thus, for example, if you don’t have Microsoft Word on your computer but you use Corel’s Word Perfect instead. You could set the DOC association to Word Perfect. (Word Perfect is a competitor to Word, and it has the facility to open Word documents.)

Finally, click on Cancel to close Folder Options and return to the Desktop.

### **Install Lesson Materials from a CD**

Your instructor will provide you with a compact disk (CD) containing your lesson materials along with a set of instructions for installing these materials on your home computer. But first, practice an installation on your computer in the computer lab. After the installation perform the following steps with your instructor’s help.

1. At the desktop double click on the AdvXP folder to reveal its contents.
2. Double click on the first lesson.
3. Refer to the illustration in the Installation Instructions and if the window does not completely fill the screen click on the “Maximize” button.
4. Use the wheel on the mouse to scroll the lesson up and down.
5. Close the window.

### **Service Pack 2 Installation**

Materials in this course are based on Windows XP with Service Pack 2 update installed. Verify this update by right-clicking on the “My Computer” icon on the Desktop<sup>1</sup> and then click on “Properties.” Under the “General” tab on the Properties window verify that the System Description includes the term

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<sup>1</sup> If the My Computer icon is missing, click on Start, right-click on My Computer and click on the “Show on Desktop” option.

“Service Pack 2.” Do this at home. If your home computer doesn’t have SP2 installed, consult with your instructor on how best to install it. If you are using a dial-up Internet connection, ask if you can be provided a copy of an SP2 CD because downloading this huge file (> 200 Mbytes!) will take forever on a dial-up connection. Service Pack 2 (SP2) is a major software update for the XP system including new and important security features. Some of the more important features are:

- Windows Security Center — All security settings in one place.
- Windows Firewall — Protection from hackers.
- Internet Explorer Download Protection — Limits access to harmful downloads.
- Attachment Manager — A new feature in the email program Outlook Express that helps guard against harmful attachments.
- Pop-up Blocker — Blocks those irritating pop-up windows when browsing the Internet.
- Windows Media Player — Installation of Version 9 of this popular program for safely viewing videos or playing music.

### **Review & Homework**

In the course of the above exercise you have used a feature that applies throughout XP, i.e. the context-sensitive menu that appears when you right-click the mouse. As you have seen, right-clicking brings up a small menu with options pertinent to the area the mouse pointer is in. This technique works not only with the Desktop and Task Bar, but with E-mail, Internet, word processing, and most other applications. So don’t hesitate to try right-clicking anywhere it may be useful. These features will be explored further in subsequent lessons.

- ÿ Use the CD and instructions provided by your instructor to install lesson materials on your computer.
- ÿ Open and review Lesson 1.
- ÿ Read through Lesson 2.