

10 ways to customize Windows 7

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There are many things you can do to personalize your copy of Windows 7 operating system. Microsoft allows you to configure all types of settings, from what appears on the desktop to programs that automatically load when Windows starts. All you need to know here is what can be changed - and how to change it.

1. Change the Desktop Theme

The first thing most people want to do when using a new computer is to work on the desktop. They often like to create a personal desktop by changing their own background image, window colors, shortcut icons, gadgets, .

These changes are made quite easy in Windows 7, users can set the background, window colors, system sounds and screen savers in components that Microsoft calls a *theme*. *Change a theme* and all these components will change.

To apply one of the pre-existing themes in Windows, follow the steps below:

1. Right-click anywhere on the desktop and click **Personalize** from the menu that appears.
2. When the Personalization window appears, as shown in Figure 1, click on the new **theme** you want to use.

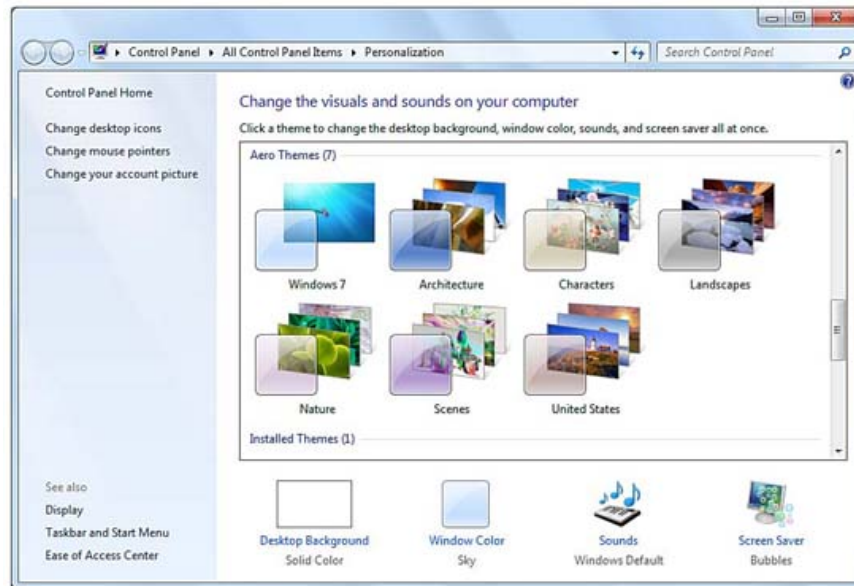


Figure 1: Use the Personalization window to select a new theme

The new theme is used as soon as you click it in the **Personalization** window - no **Save** or the **OK** button for you to click. This means that you can see how the theme is displayed while you are still in the Personalization window - and can change it to another theme if you don't like the theme you just selected.

You can also create your own themes. Start by applying the background, color, sound and screen saver of the desktop you want to the theme; Your choices will now appear in the Personalization window as an unsaved Theme.

Right-click this **Theme** in the window and select **Save Theme** ; When prompted, give the theme a name and click the **Save** button. This new theme will appear in the Personalization window so you can choose later.

2. Create a photo Slideshow of the background

You don't have to change the entire theme to personalize Windows. Windows allows you to change each component in the theme separately, starting with the desktop background.

In previous versions of Windows, you could select a photo to make the desktop background. However, Windows 7 allows you to have multiple backgrounds displayed in turn in a slideshow. This is a great way to view all your favorite photos without having to manually switch background images.

To create a slideshow of your desktop, follow the steps below:

1. Right-click somewhere on the desktop, then click **Personalize** from the menu that appears.
2. When the Personalization window appears, click **Desktop Background** .
3. From the Desktop Background window, as shown in Figure 2, click the **Picture Location** list and select the type of background you want.

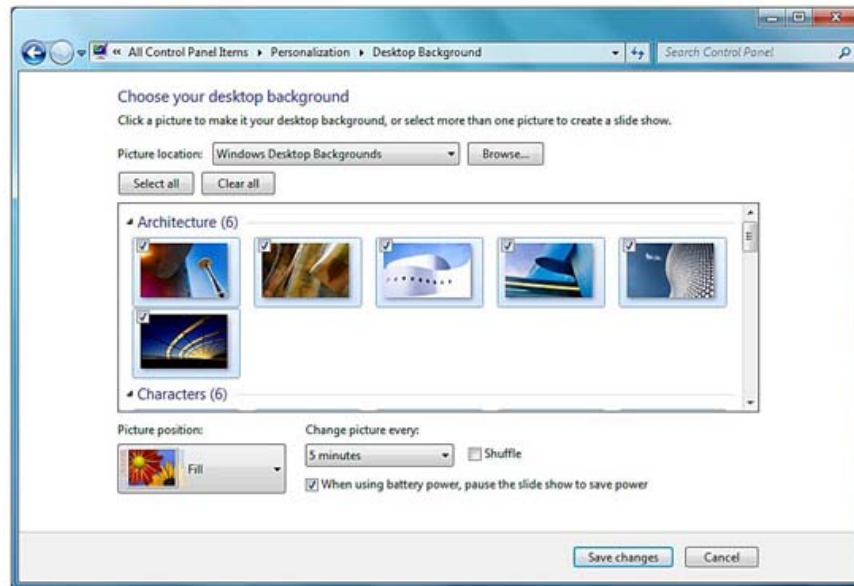


Figure 2: Select an image for the slideshow

4. Hold down **Ctrl** and click on the background images you want to put in the slideshow.
5. To set how long each background will display, select a value from the **Change Picture Every list**.
6. To display background images in a random order, click the **Shuffle** option.
7. Click **Save Changes**.

The desktop background will be changed and display all the images you have selected in turn.

3. Move Taskbar

The taskbar is an area located at the bottom of the desktop. Most Windows users like to display the taskbar in its default location, but some other users want to move them to the side of the screen or at the top of the screen.

You can locate the taskbar on the left side of the screen as shown in Figure 3, especially if you have a wide screen (widescreen) then this is a reasonable example to use this type of positioning.



Figure 3: Taskbar has been moved to the left side of the screen

So how to move taskbar? Very easy, you just need to follow the steps below:

1. Right-click a point on the taskbar and select **Properties** . (Another way you can do this is to open **Control Panel** and select **Taskbar and Start Menu**)
2. When the Properties dialog box of Taskbar and Start Men appears, select the **Taskbar** tab.
3. Scroll down to the **Taskbar Location** list **on Screen** and select the location you want to select: Bottom, Left, Right or Top.
4. Click **OK** .

If you locate the taskbar at the top of the screen, the Start menu will scroll down instead of popping up as usual. If you select the taskbar on the left side of the screen, the Start menu will open to the right, and if you locate the taskbar on the right side of the screen, the Start menu will open to the left.

4. Add programs and documents to the Taskbar

The taskbar in Windows 7 is quite different from previous Windows versions. In previous versions, the taskbar existed to show you which programs or documents were currently opened in Windows. However, in Windows 7, the taskbar has more tasks, it also keeps shortcuts for your favorite applications and documents. If smart taskbar configuration, you can rarely use Windows' Start menu.

To add an application or document to the taskbar, follow these steps:

1. Open the **Start** menu or **Windows Explorer** and navigate to the application or document you want to add to the taskbar.
2. Right-click the item and select **Pin to Taskbar** from the menu that appears.

To rearrange the buttons on the taskbar, use the mouse to drag and drop the buttons to the new location. To remove an item in the taskbar, right-click the button to display the **Jump List** ; then select **Unpin This Program**

from the **Taskbar** .

5. Customize the Start menu

The Start menu is what you see when you click the **Start** button on the Windows taskbar. This is a menu consisting of two panels and some items that appear in the right pane by default: links to Documents, Pictures, and Music libraries; a submenu of recently opened documents; links to Control Panel and Help, etc. You can remove any item or all items from the Start menu, and you can add additional items to the Start menu to use for purposes. mine.

In addition, some items can be displayed in different ways. For example, default the Documents section in a Documents window when clicked. However, you can choose to display the Documents item as a menu - that is, when you click it, it will display a submenu containing the items in the Documents library.

You can follow the steps below to customize the right pane of the Start menu:

1. Right-click the **Start** button and select **Properties** from the menu that appears.
2. When the Properties dialog of the Taskbar and Start Menu appears, select the **Start Menu** tab.
3. Click the **Customize** button.
4. When the **Customize Start Menu** dialog box appears, as shown in Figure 4, scroll to the item you want to appear in the Start menu.

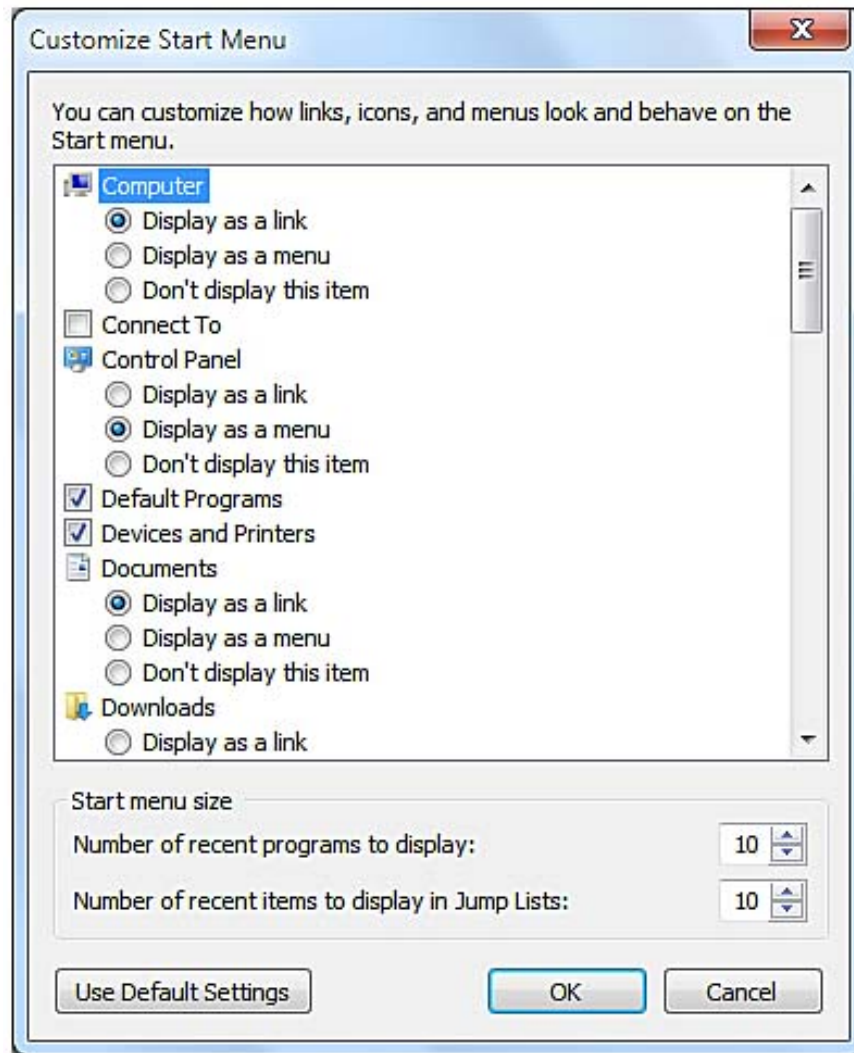


Figure 4: Customize the items in the right pane of the Start menu.

5. If there is only one checkbox for that item, check this box. You will then see the item display as a link when clicked, and the system will open a new window for that item.
6. Some items have three options. To display an item as a link (when it opens it opens a new window), check and **display Display as a Link** . To display as a menu (when a submenu appears), select **Display as a Menu** .
7. If you don't want an item to be displayed on the Start menu, uncheck the check box or check the **Don't Display This Item option** .
8. Click **OK** when you're done.

6. Change the role of the Power button

The Power button is a big button on the bottom right of the Start menu that you normally use to turn off the computer. However, you can also choose another function for this button, for example:

- Shut Down

- hibernate
- Sleep
- Restart
- Lock
- Log Off
- Switch User

At this point, all of these options will be available when you click the arrow next to the Power button. However, you can assign any of these options to the Power button by following the steps below:

1. Right-click the **Start** button and select **Properties** from the menu that appears (Alternatively, open **Control Panel** and select **Taskbar and Start Menu**)
2. When the Taskbar and Start Menu Properties dialog box appears, select the **Start Menu** tab.
3. Drag the slider down to the Power Button Action list and select a new option.
4. Click **OK** .

7. Add a desktop gadget

In Windows 7 you can add functionality to your desktop through what Microsoft calls *gadgets* - small utility applications that perform a simple function. For example, the Clock gadget displays in real time, Weather reports on the current weather conditions and the weather forecast in your area, .

In Windows Vista, gadgets are displayed in a Sidebar and take away the valuable space of the desktop. Windows 7 does not use the Sidebar and allows you to display gadgets directly on the Windows desktop - wherever you want.

To add a gadget to your desktop, follow the steps below:

1. Right-click on a certain point on the desktop; then select **Gadgets** from the menu that appears.
2. When the Gadgets window appears, as shown in Figure 5, double-click the gadget you want to add.



Figure 5: Adding gadgets to the desktop

Although there are only a limited number of gadgets in the Gadgets window, there are many other gadgets that you can search online. All you have to do is click **Get More Gadgets Online** from the **Gadgets** window; then you will open the browser and display the **Personalize Your PC** page.

Click on the **Desktop Gadgets** tab, then select the **Get More Desktop Gadgets link** . Click the **Download** button to download and install the gadget you want.

After adding a gadget to the desktop, you can locate it somewhere by clicking and dragging the gadget with your mouse. To remove a gadget from the desktop, hover over the gadget and click **X**.

8. Change the default programs of Windows 7

One of the interesting changes in Windows 7 is that you don't have to stick with Windows default programs, such as Internet Explorer and Windows Media Player. If you want to use another program for certain activities, you can easily change what starts automatically.

Here's how to do it:

1. Open the **Start** menu and select **Default Programs** .
2. When the Default Programs window appears, click **Set Program Access and Computer Defaults**.
3. When the Set Program Access and Computer Defaults window opens, as shown in Figure 6, click the down arrow to expand the **Custom** section.
4. For each listed activity, the program volume you want to use is the default application.
5. Click **OK** when done.

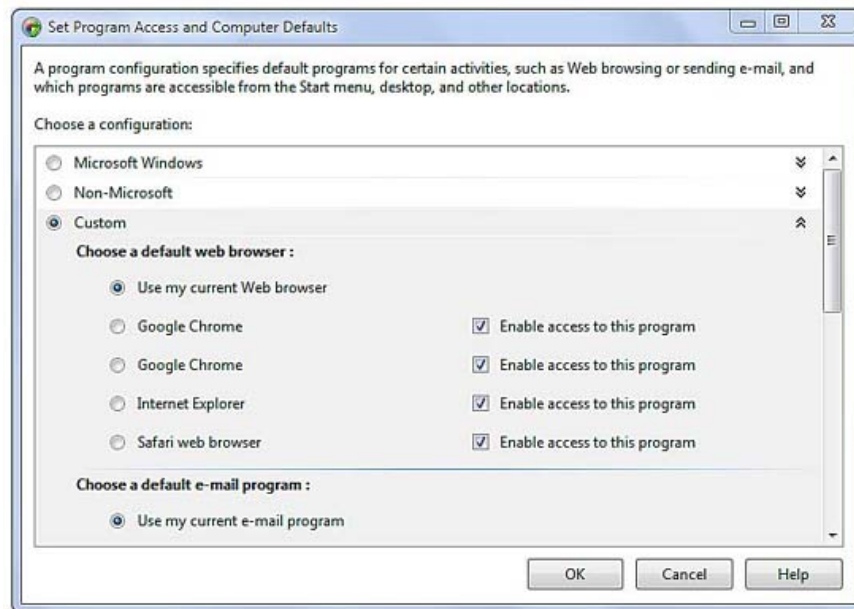


Figure 6: Change the default programs

Remember that you can set up a program that is the default program only if you have it installed on your computer. For example, if you want to switch from Internet Explorer to Mozilla Firefox, you must download and install Firefox on your computer.

9. Remove programs that automatically load

Windows loads a lot of programs and processes when it starts. Many programs or processes in it are really necessary for Windows, but there are some programs that are unnecessary.

Programs or processes that run automatically on unnecessary startup will consume computer memory space, making your system run slower than it can.

Microsoft recognized the problem with unnecessary auto-loading programs and released a utility called Autoruns to search and manage all startup programs. You can download Autoruns for free [here](#).

As you can see in Figure 7, Autoruns displays everything that Windows loads when launching on a series of tabs. Each tab is used for a specific type of program or process.

For example, the Drivers tab lists all the load drivers in startup; The Everything tab lists the components listed on all the remaining tabs. Click on an item to see more details about it in the info panel at the bottom of the window.

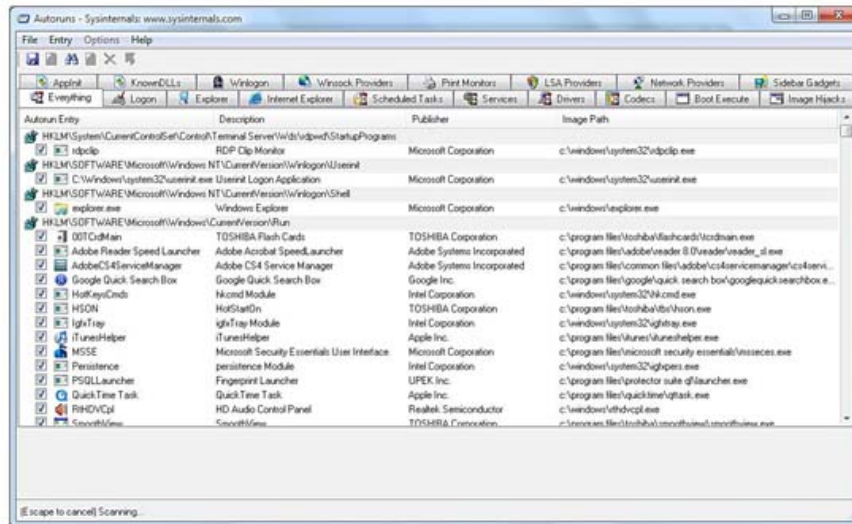


Figure 7: Managing auto-load programs with Autoruns utility

To stop an item so that it does not start when Windows starts, uncheck the checkbox of that item. When you next start Windows, the item will not be automatically loaded as usual.

10. Remove unnecessary Windows components

Autoruns helps you free up system memory by automatically loading unnecessary programs when starting Windows. However that is not the only way to free up system memory; You can turn off Windows features that you don't need to use to increase system memory. All you need to do is follow the steps below:

1. From the **Control Panel** , select **Programs and Features** .
2. When the Programs and Features window appears, select **Turn Windows Features On or Off** from the task pane.
3. When the Windows Features dialog box appears, as shown in Figure 8, uncheck the features you want to disable.
4. If you want to re-enable any feature, put it in the **Windows Features** dialog box.
5. If prompted to confirm your choice, select **Yes** .
6. Click **OK** to close the Windows Features dialog box.

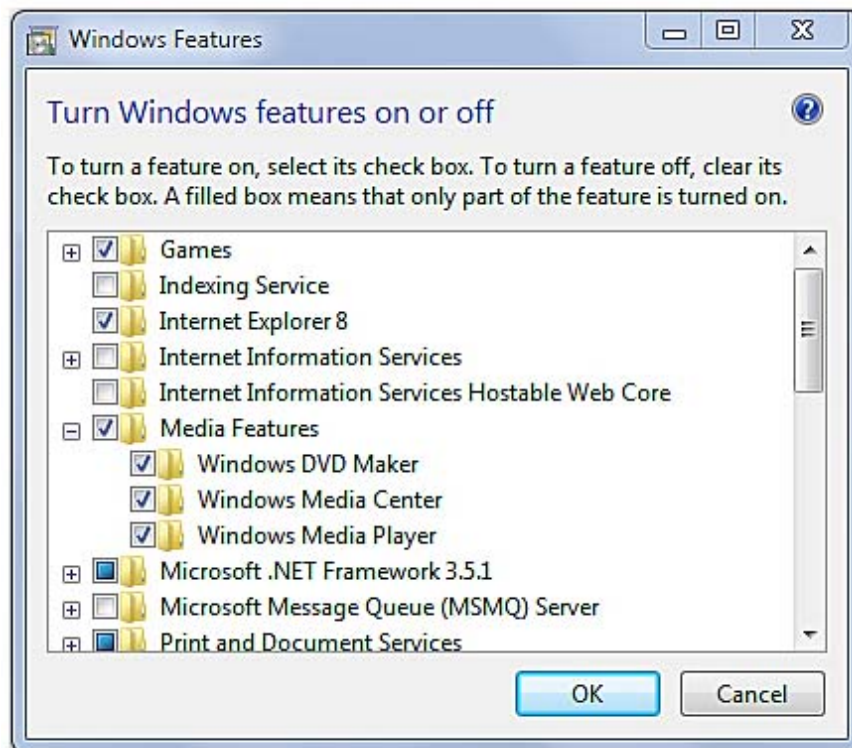


Figure 8: Disable unnecessary Windows features

Note that disabling a feature does not mean that you delete them from your system that still exists in the system, still taking up your hard drive space. This way you can easily reactivate any previously disabled features without reinstalling Windows.

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