Getting Started with Windows XP

Software: Windows XP   Availability: Purchase

Overview

The XP in "Windows XP" stands for experience, and Microsoft's goal with this latest operating system is to improve the user experience. Interface changes to make your computer easy to configure and customize can be found throughout the operating system. At the same time the underlying system management and organization has been updated for better stability and today's increasingly networked and multi-user environments.

Windows XP is available in Home and Professional editions. Though the two editions both contain the same interface and core system technology, some management programs are unavailable in the Home edition. For example, the remote desktop capability is only found in the Professional version. XP Professional is the version installed on classroom, staff and faculty desktops.

User Accounts

One of the biggest changes for your user experience with Windows XP will be to get used to working in a multi-user environment. Everyone who uses the computer must login, and each unique user has their own "user" folder where application preferences and documents are stored. On campus, you will see the Novell Login Screen (fig. 1) which gives you access to additional network services on our Novell Network such as file servers and printing. If you wish to login to Windows only, click on the Workstation only button. If your computer does not have Novell installed, you will see a similar Windows login dialog box. If you do not wish to see your Windows login dialog box, you can configure your computer to login with a particular user account automatically in the User Accounts Control Panel.
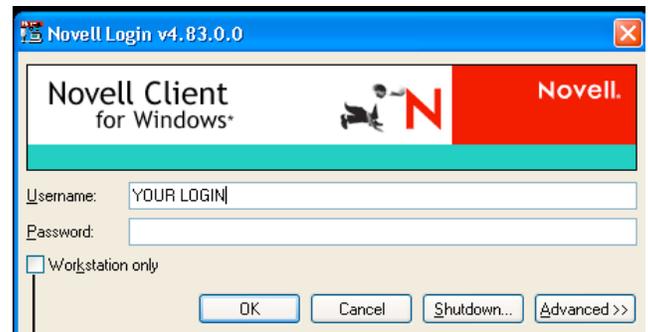

fig. 1

Click here to login to Windows only! Novell network services such as printing will not be available. To access network printing, you must login with this box NOT checked.

Workspace

The default Windows XP desktop at Lewis & Clark is set to have a more classic view with icons for My Documents, My Computer and My Network Places. If you prefer a cleaner desktop view without these icons, simply right-click anywhere on the desktop and select **Properties**. Click on the **Themes** tab and select **Windows XP** from the list of available themes.   To select what default items appear on your desktop, click on the **Desktop** Tab. Click the **Customize Desktop** button to be able to uncheck unwanted icons.
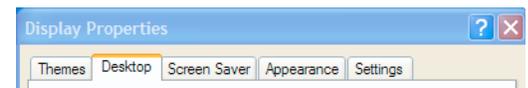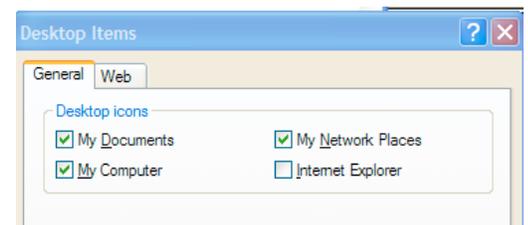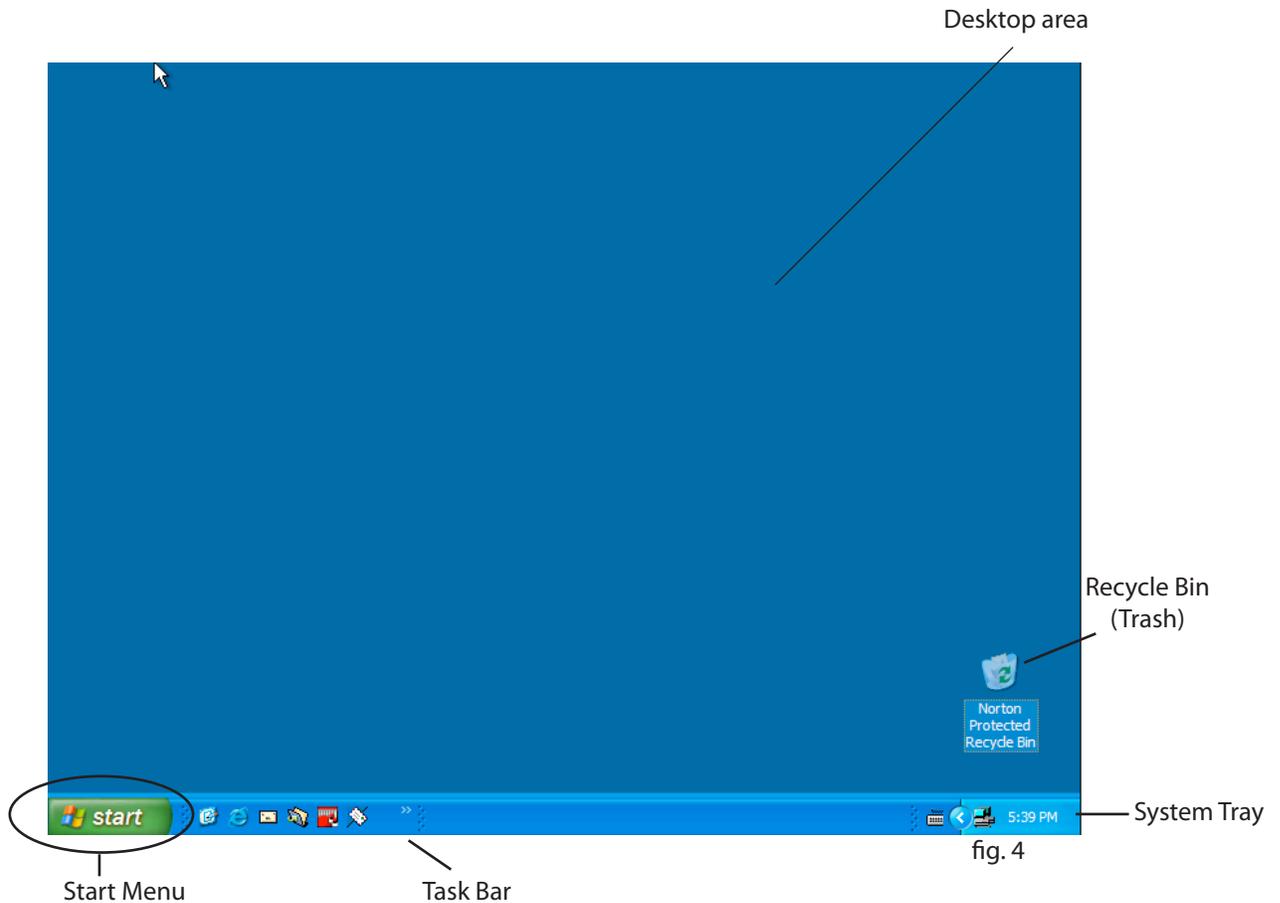

fig. 2

fig. 3

Select the Themes and Desktop tab to control the appearance of your Windows XP Desktop (figs. 2 and 3)

The default Windows XP desktop is below (fig 4). The "Start" Menu located in the lower left hand corner of the screen is the main navigational tool for accessing programs, settings and documents on your Computer.

Desktop area

Recycle Bin
(Trash)

Nor ton
Protected
Recycle Bin

System Tray
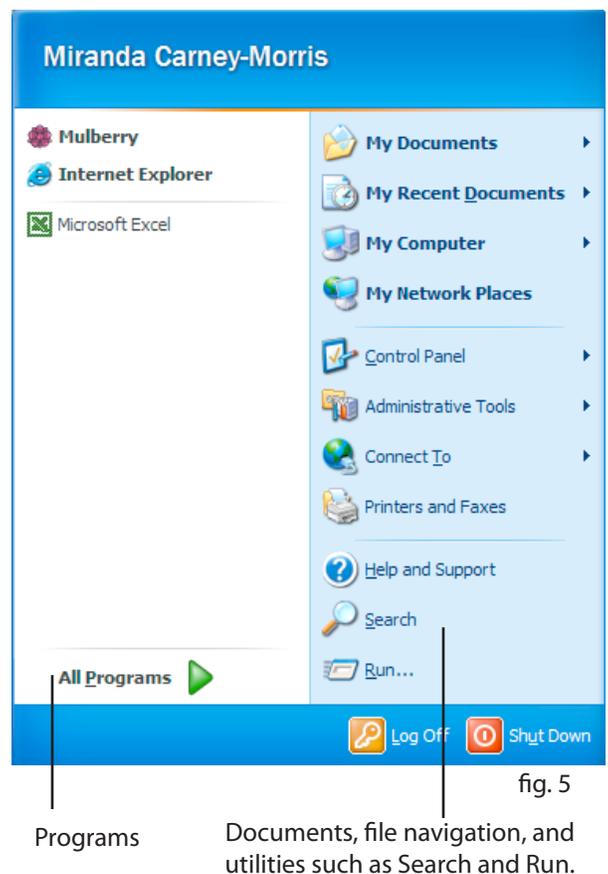
fig. 4

Start Menu   Task Bar

1. To launch a program using the **Start Menu** click on the **Start** button to open the start menu (fig. 5).
2. The Windows XP Start Menu is divided in two areas. **Programs** are located on the left; **Documents**, **Settings** and **Utilities** are located on the right. To launch a program, click to select it from your recently launched program list or browse all installed programs by clicking on **All Programs** to expand your programs menu.
3. Locate and click on the program you wish to load.

You also use the Start Menu to Shut Down or Log Off your user account from the Windows XP computer.

Finally, you can customize the Start Menu, including reverting back to the Classic Windows XP/2000 style, by right-clicking on the Start Menu and selecting **Properties**.
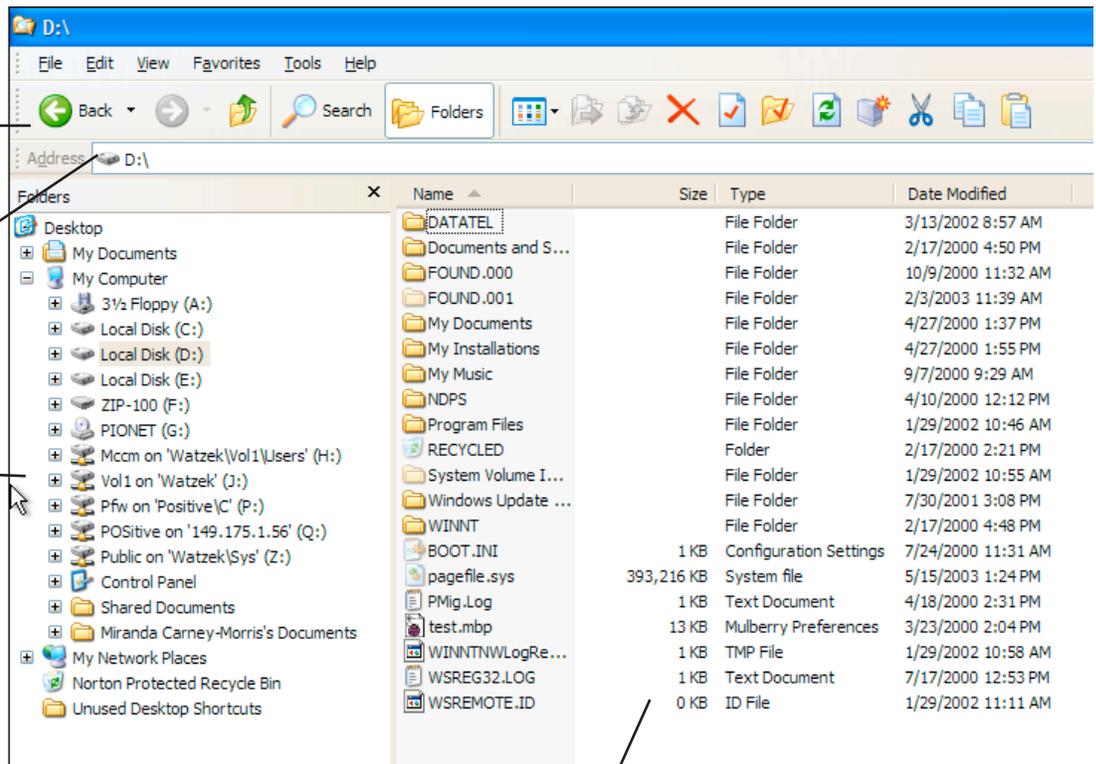
Windows Explorer
The most effective way of managing your files is through **Windows Explorer**. Access **Explorer** by right-clicking on the Start Menu and selecting **Explore**. Use Windows Explorer to copy, move, and manage documents by dragging and dropping them into a variety of folders or deleting them from the system. Explorer is also where you can configure folder options for browsing your network files as well as determine which application Windows uses to open particular types of files.

Miranda Carney-Morris

Mulberry
Internet Explorer
Microsoft Excel

My Documents
My Recent Documents
My Computer
My Network Places
Control Panel
Administrative Tools
Connect To
Printers and Faxes
Help and Support
Search
Run...

All Programs

Log Off   Shut Down

fig. 5

Programs

Documents, file navigation, and utilities such as Search and Run.

Toolbar: Customize by right-clicking and selecting Properties.

Address Bar: Displays full path name of selected document.

Folders window: Hierarchical view of all local hard drives, removable media (floppy disks, zip disks, CD-ROMs, etc.), and mounted network drives connected to your computer.

fig. 6

Contents View: Lists actual contects of selected folder. You can click a file name to rename a file. Double-click a file icon to open the file or launch a program.

Creating & Deleting Folders

In Windows Explorer, follow the steps listed below to make or delete a New Folder.

1. Locate the menus at the top of the screen. Click on **File** and scroll to **New** and follow the menu as it grows. Click on **Folder**.
2. Locate the New Folder on the right-hand side of the screen. Rename it by clicking once on it and typing in a new name (fig. 7).
3. To delete this folder, click on it and while keeping the mouse button depressed, locate the Recycle Bin on the left-hand side of the screen. Drag the New Folder over the Recycle Bin making sure that the Recycle Bin name highlights. Then let go of the mouse button. The New Folder will be permanently deleted when you empty your Recycle bin.
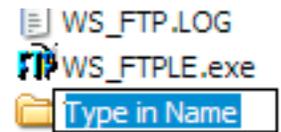

fig. 7

Control Panels

Control Panels is the area in Windows where you can add and remove software or hardware and control various system settings. To access your Control Panels, go to the Start Menu and Select Control Panels. Follow the steps below to Install or Remove software from your computer.

1. Click on the **Add or Remove Programs** Icon (*click switch to classic view to display all control panels*).
2. To remove a program, select it from the list of installed programs and click the Change/Remove button.
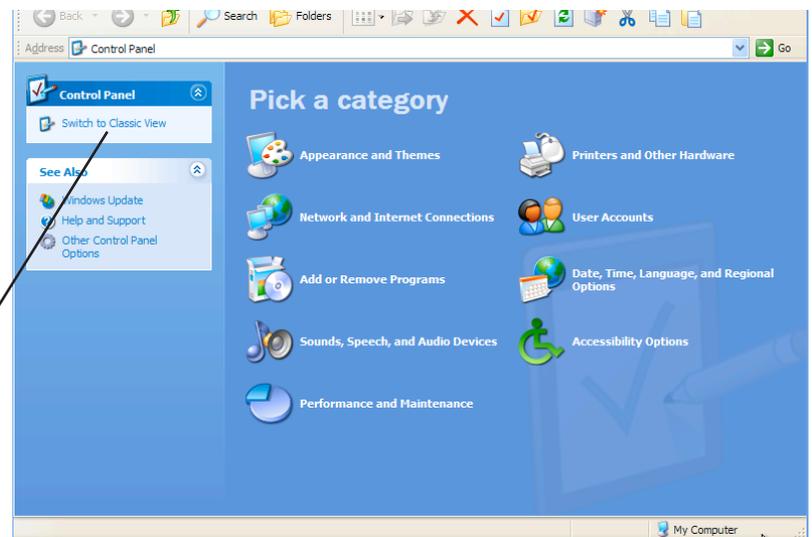3. To install a new program, click the **Add New Programs** button and select the application installer when

fig. 8

Additional Features

- Ability to write or 'burn' directly to CD-ROMs without any specialized software by dragging the files you wish to copy to the CD-R/RW icon in My Computer.

- Device Driver rollback saves a copy of the previous driver whenever you update drivers for printers, ethernet cards, or other peripherals. If the new driver doesn't work properly, you can restore the previous driver. *Start -> Control Panels -> System -> Hardware -> Device Manager -> Device Properties -> Driver Tab*

- Automatic and configurable Windows System and Internet Explorer updates. *Start -> Control Panels -> System -> Automatic Updates Tab*

- "Last Known Good Configuration" start-up option to help recover from and troubleshoot installation problems.

- System Restore monitors and records key changes to your system. You can "restore" your system to a previous time when your computer was performing optimally.   *Start -> Help & Support -> System Restore Wizard (located under Tasks)*

- Improved compatibility with legacy applications. Use the compatibility tab to emulate Windows 95 or other version. *Right Click on program or file -> Select Properties -> Compatibility Tab*

- Remote Access/Remote Assistance *Start -> Control Panels -> System -> Remote Tab*

- Multiple network connection settings and automatic ethernet and wireless network detection. *Start -> Control Panels -> System -> Network Connection*

Beware Spyware!

Spyware and adware are generally defined as software that gets installed on your computer, usually without your knowledge. It is used to collect information about you and relay it to others, create vulnerabilities in your system to allow hackers to access your computer, or bombard you with information via pop-up windows or your web browser window. The Windows operating system is the usual target of these invasive applications.

• *Signs and Symptoms* - Overly slow machine, pop-ups even when you are not online, new programs on your desktop that you don't remember installing, search and toolbars added to your internet browser, or your web browser going to web pages you didn't request.

• *But where did it come from???* - Some spyware programs piggyback and install themselves when you download and install other programs, without you being aware. Other spyware is written into the code of webpages, so when you visit a website spyware is downloaded to your machine. Pop-up windows are a common vehicle, by clicking the "close window" text (not the "x" of the window) you may be inadvertently giving the go ahead for a download.

• *Prevention* - If a webpage prompts you to download something before you will be able to view the page, before clicking OK, check to see what it is asking you to download and if you know and trust the product and company. Read the terms and conditions of downloads to see if there will be other software bundled in that you do not want. Run your anti-spyware software periodically, and make sure to update it frequently. Keep Windows up to date against security threats by downloading and installing Windows and Internet Explorer patches and updates.

• *How to remove* - Even being very cautios, you still may find your machine with a spyware infestation. There are programs designed to help you remove spyware from your system. Two programs free for download are *Adaware* and *Spybot: Search and Destroy.* Be cautious about downloading other free spyware removal tools, they may be just a ploy and in the end simply ask for money. Suspicious programs can also be uninstalled by going to the *Control Panels - > Add/Remove Programs.*