

## **Prevent Windows from automatically running programs you don't need.**

You may be working in a program and wondering why it runs so slow — especially if you don't have any other programs open. The problem is that when Windows boots up, a lot of programs are automatically loaded to run “in the background” where you can't see. Of course, some of these are quite valuable (virus protection for instance), but many are useless and simply eating up your system resources for no reason.

### **Seek and destroy**

Here's how to get rid of these unnecessary start-up programs:

The first and easiest way to seek and destroy unnecessary start-up programs is to look in your Startup folder.

- Click Start, then choose All Programs or Programs (depending on your setup).
- Find the Startup folder on the list and hover your mouse over it.
- The list of programs that automatically start will appear. Check this list, and if you see something you don't want or need to start automatically — such as some Microsoft Office task — right-click it and choose Delete.

Repeat as necessary.

### **Stop automatic starts**

Now let's go a little deeper. Remember EasyCleaner from Lesson 2 ? It has another useful function besides cleaning the Registry: It can tell you what programs start automatically and let you stop them. Here's how:

- Start the program and click the Startup button.
- You'll see a list of all the programs that start automatically with Windows. Most of these should start: your anti-virus program, a Windows program called HDAShCut, maybe a driver or two. But some things just waste resources.
- Most notorious for loading themselves are media players such as Quicktime and RealPlayer. There's no need for them to be loaded until you need them. If you see things like that which don't belong, select them and click the Delete button. When you're done, click Close and close EasyCleaner.

### **Deep cleaning**

That done, let's go even deeper. Besides programs that run automatically when you start up, Windows also launches *services* — internal software that does

important things, such as making your network run, managing users, and a host of other things.

But there are some services you just don't need; running them is a waste of resources.

- To get to the list of services, click Start, then Run.
- Enter **services.msc** in the box. The screen that pops up is a bit intimidating at first, but it's actually pretty straightforward. It lists every service on your machine and tells you whether it starts automatically or manually, among other things.
- Click the Extended tab on the bottom, which will create a space that will give you a description of each service.
- Now click on the words "Startup Type" at the top of that column, which will sort the services. The ones that say "Automatic" are — obviously — the ones that start when Windows does. They're the only ones you care about.



**ALERT:**

Some services are critical for your computer to run. So don't disable anything that's not on the list below unless you're absolutely sure that it's an expendable item.

The following lists services you can probably do without. Of course, if you recognize one that you use such as Windows Messenger or Telnet, don't turn it off.

Alerter  
Clipbook  
Computer Browser  
Distributed Link Tracking Client  
Error Reporting Service (if you don't want to be asked to send error reports to Microsoft anymore)  
Fast User Switching  
Human Interface Access Devices  
IPSEC Services  
Messenger  
NetMeeting Remote Desktop Sharing  
Portable Media Serial Number  
Remote Desktop Help Session Manager  
Remote Procedure Call Locator

Remote Registry  
Routing & Remote Access  
Secondary Logon  
Server  
SSDP Discovery Service  
Telnet  
TCP/IP NetBIOS Helper  
Upload Manager  
Universal Plug and Play Device Host  
Workstation

Pick one from the list and double-click it. You'll see a drop-down menu next to "Startup type" that is currently set to Automatic.

Change it to Manual and click OK. This way the service will start only if it's needed, not all the time.

#### **Special services**

Two services deserve special mention: the indexing service and Windows themes.

The indexing service's job is to keep track of every file on your computer, so if you use Windows' search function you'll be able to find things faster. But if you don't use search that often, the indexing service is a waste of resources and will slow you down.

That's why disabling the indexing service is high on the list of many speed tweakers. To do that, go back to your list of services (Start, Run, enter services.msc — see above), scroll down to Indexing Service, and set the Startup type to "Disabled."

Finally, if you're using the Windows Classic theme (we suggested switching to it), you can free up some memory. Scroll down the list of services to Themes and set it to "Disabled."