

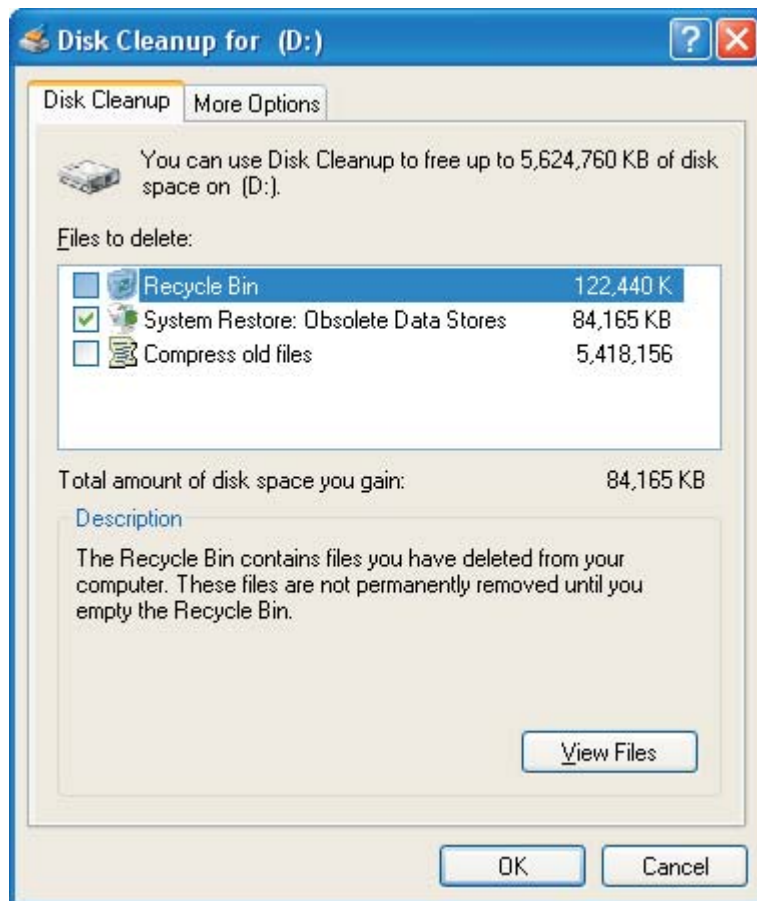
## Explore how to remove unwanted files and programs from your computer and make sure Windows is up-to-date.

Over time, Windows XP tends to get clogged up with extra files and programs that can slow down your computer's performance and cause your computer to behave strangely or even stop working altogether. Here's how to keep Windows running smoothly.

### Delete Unwanted Files and Programs

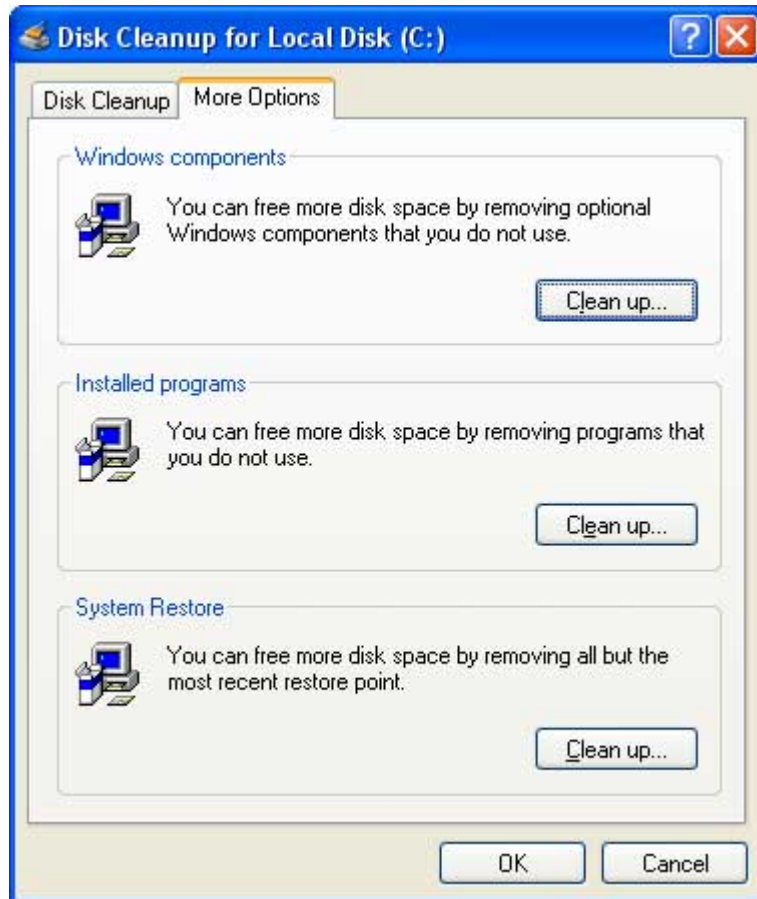
Windows Disk Cleanup Utility keeps your hard drive free of unneeded files and programs, frees disk space, and can even speed up PC performance.

1. Click **Start | All Programs | Accessories | System Tools | Disk Cleanup** to start the utility.
2. Select the hard drive you want to clean from the pull-down menu and click **OK**.
3. Be patient. It may take a while for Windows to scan the disk. When done, Windows displays the categories of files it deems suitable for deletion.
4. Click a category to see a description of the selected files to be deleted. If you want to see a list of the individual files in a category, click **View Files** as shown below.



Pick a category and click View Files to see all the files and folders to be deleted.

5. Double-check to ensure you're not deleting any important files, especially those in the Recycle Bin.
6. Click the **More Options** tab to remove even more files, as shown below.



Free extra disk space by removing unneeded restore points and programs.

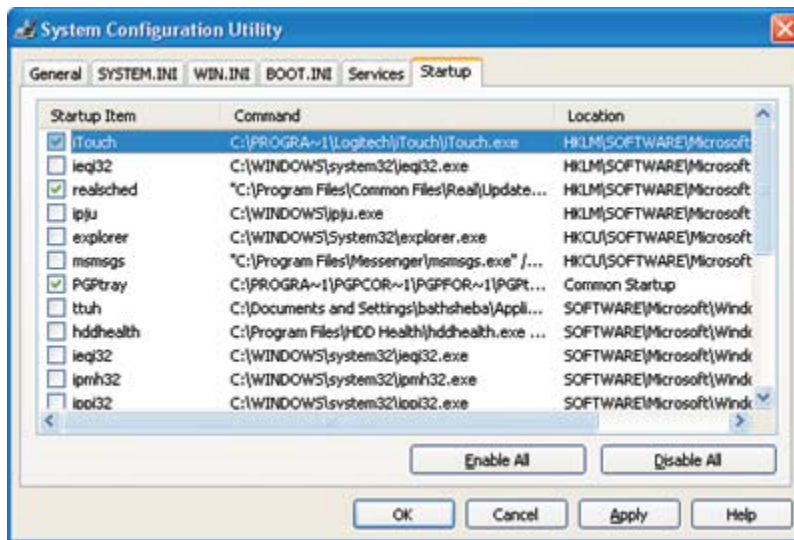
7. When you're ready, click **OK** to begin the clean up process.

### Delete Unwanted Startup Programs

As you add software to your PC, the number of programs that automatically start with Windows gets bigger and bigger. You probably don't need all these programs running all the time; they just eat up memory and increase the chances of a software conflict. To remove the ones you don't want:

1. Go to **Start | Run** and type **msconfig** in the text box. This brings up the System Configuration Utility.
2. Select the **Startup** tab. You'll see a list of all the programs that automatically start with Windows, as shown below. Remove the check in

the box next to a program name, and that program won't start with Windows.



Disable any programs that you don't need or don't recognize by removing the check from the adjacent box.

3. Click the **Enable All** or **Disable All** buttons to do just that.
4. If you're unsure what a particular program does, look under Command for the location of the program file.



**Note:** Disabling a program that's on the Startup list won't disable the program permanently; it just prevents it from starting automatically.

5. Pick the programs you want to disable, or click Enable All or Disable All to manipulate all the programs at once. Remember, you can always start a disabled program manually from the **Start | All Programs** menu or by finding the program's executable file in Windows Explorer and double-clicking it.
6. Reboot your computer to complete the process.

## Keep Windows Up to Date

Windows is always a work in progress; Microsoft regularly issues updates that fix inadequacies and sometimes even add improvements. Downloading and installing the latest updates for your PC is easy:

1. Go to **Start | Help and Support** and under **Pick A Task**, click **Windows Update**. Windows will automatically connect to the Windows Update website. On-screen instructions will walk you through the process of determining which updates you need, downloading those updates to your computer, and installing them.
2. If you want your computer to automatically download Windows updates while you're not using it—while you sleep, for example—enable **Automatic Updates**. Click Start, right-click My Computer, select Properties, and then select the Automatic Updates tab as shown below.

