

MY COMPUTER IS SO SLOW!!

- Scenario:

You buy a new computer that runs fast at first, you are happy enjoying your new computer getting things done, downloading stuff, browsing the internet like there is no tomorrow, maybe even reading up on some of the awesome things your new computer can do, sending emails to your buddies “Hey I just got my new computer, this thing is fast!”

Then months later it is running soooo sloooooow.....

- What is going on?

Is my computer broken? What did I do wrong? Maybe the computer has a part that has gone bad (kind of like my car does)? Or maybe I need a new computer already? This stinks!

First of all it's rare but it can be a part on the computer that has gone bad. You look for the support contact information that came with the computer and you call. Twenty-five frustrating minutes later it's determined by your support technician on the phone that it is not a hardware problem or worse that you are out of warranty but he or she can still help for a nominal fee which does not include parts and operator error.

- Solution:

Usually it's not the computers fault or even a bad part. Usually it is because you have not maintained your computer to keep it running at its **peak performance level**. In this breakout session we are going to concentrate on the user's actions and how it affects the computer and what you can do to get it back up to its peak performance level and keep it running at that level.

- The average user:

The average user uses his or her computer for downloading pictures and music, browsing the internet, emailing, and posting on their favorite social network like Facebook, maybe even instant messaging.

First let's take the pictures and music. If you download music or pictures from the internet, beware, you can get bad stuff imbedded in them that can affect the computer. Also if you install a lot of pictures and music and then remove some in order to add more, it can have an effect on the computer. This also goes for software that you download or buy, install and then when bored of it, remove it. None of these activities are bad, but they have effects on the computer that start to slow its performance. **TIP (always pay for music)**

Browsing the internet, email and instant messaging. When you go to certain web sites, little programs or tracking cookies are put on your computer. Also, if you open attachments in emails, little programs can be installed on your computer. If you Instant Message a lot and go to web site links people send you or open things other people send you, all affect the computers performance. None of these activities are bad, they are fun and that is why we have computers besides getting work done of course.

- Running at peak performance level:

You need to do some simple maintenance once in a while or you can wait until it's so slow that you pay someone like me to fix it.

STEPS:

1. Empty Recycle Bin
2. Empty entities in C:/Windows/Temp folder
3. Run %temp% and empty entities
4. Run Prefetch and empty entities
5. Clear browser history/cache
6. Uninstall software you don't use
7. Scan with antivirus
8. Scan for Malware
9. Run Scandisk to check for hard drive errors
10. Defrag hard drive
11. msconfig, and stop background loads

1. **EMPTY RECYCLE BIN**

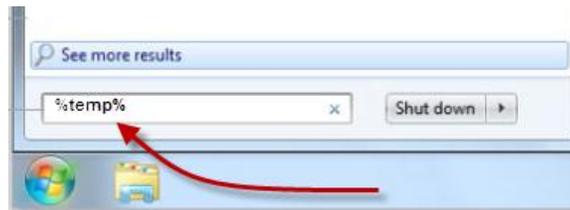
Make sure all your programs are closed
Recycle Bin is on the Desktop, right click on it and choose Empty Recycle Bin.

2. **EMPTY TEMP FOLDER**

Next go to Start-Accessories-Windows Explorer (C:) WINDOWS\TEMP folder, double click the temp folder to open it, then to Select All do a **Ctrl-a**, everything will be highlighted blue. Then right click on a highlighted file and choose Delete. Yes you want to delete everything, if you can't delete a file just leave it; you have a program running that is using the file.

3. **EMPTY %TEMP%**

Next go to Start-Run or Start-Search in Windows 7, type in %temp%



<-Start-Search example

again do to Select All do a Ctrl-a and delete everything

4. EMPTY PREFETCH

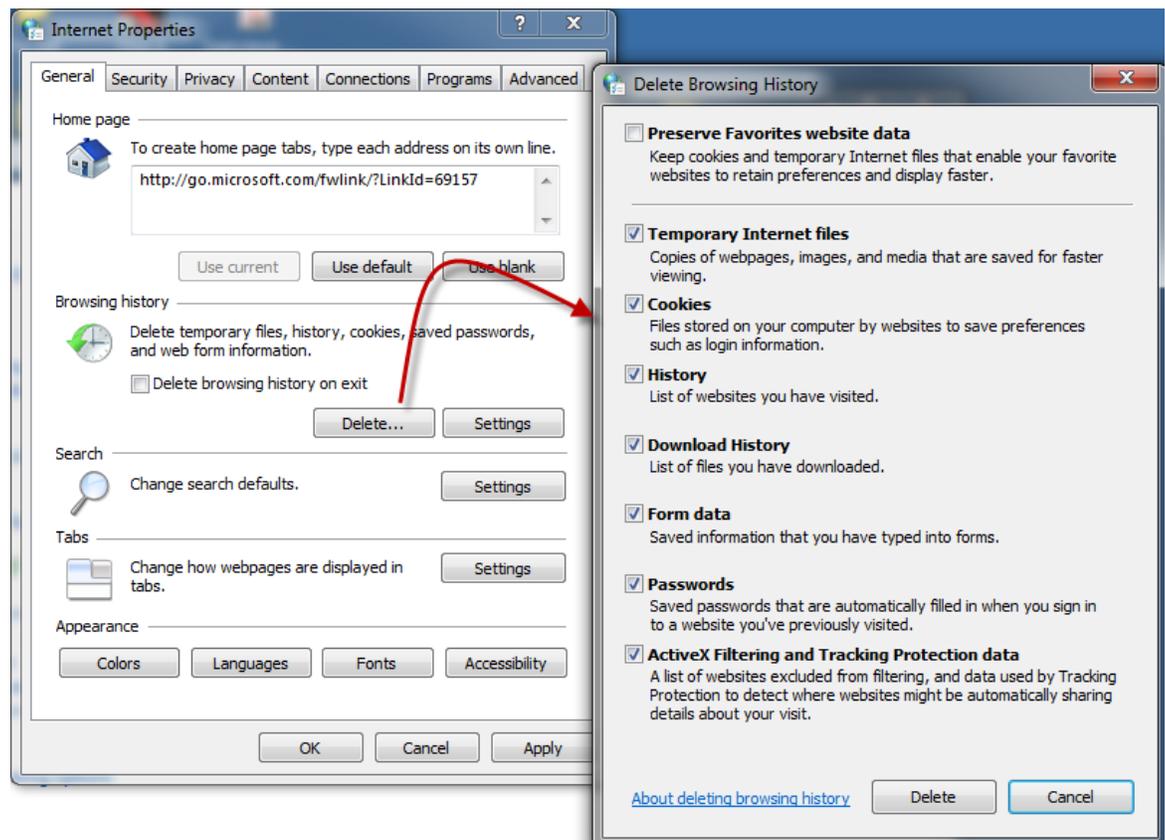
Next go to Start-Run or Start-Search window in Windows 7, type in prefetch again to Select All do a Ctrl-a and delete everything

5. CLEAR BROWSER

Next go to Start-Control Panel-Internet Options; double click it to open it, if you do not see Internet "Options" type it in the search window upper right corner:



Then go to the General tab, should be at that tab when you open options. Go to Browsing History and click the Delete button, Make sure all is selected excluding "Preserve Favorites website data" Here is an example using Internet Explorer 9: "Deleting browser history is also known as clearing browser cache"



6. UNINSTALL SOFTWARE

Next step go to the Control Panel-Add/Remove and see if there are is any Software installed that is no longer used or that has been installed without you knowing it. If there is remove them, if you are not sure what they are, do a search on Google and find out about it. If you know what they are but forgot what they do, go to the start menu and start it up.

NOTE: When you buy a computer from a store it comes preloaded with a lot of software that has a 30 day free trial period and then it bugs you to buy it, also known as “Junk ware”. I just remove it right from the getgo and download free versions of what I really need, like antivirus Microsoft Security Essentials.

TIP (other free s.w. I always install: Adobe Reader, Adobe Flash and SUN Java)

TIP (If you are running an older version of Microsoft Office use Microsoft Compatibility Pack)

<http://www.microsoft.com/downloads/details.aspx?familyid=941B3470-3AE9-4AEE-8F43-C6BB74CD1466&displaylang=en>

7. SCAN ANTIVIRUS

Next we want to run a scan with your antivirus, make sure it's updated.

8. SCAN MALWARE

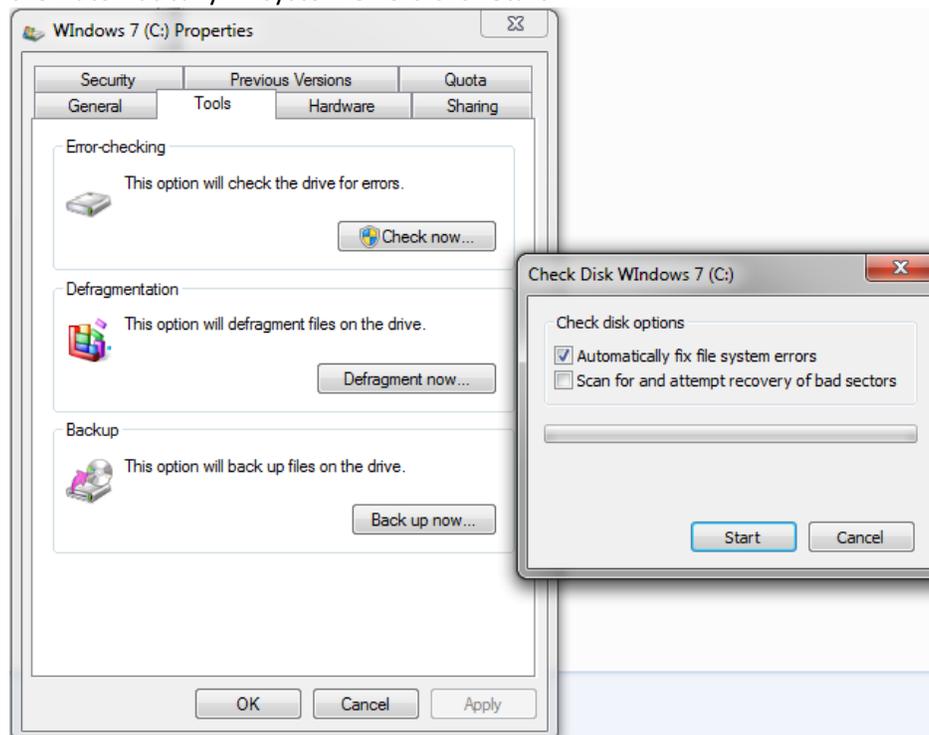
Next we want to run a scan for malware, you can get a free one that works very well here:

http://www.malwarebytes.org/products/malwarebytes_free

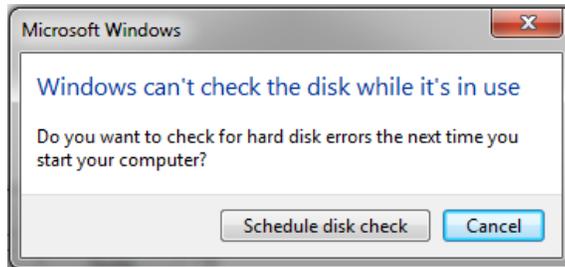
TIP (Remember **ALT-F4** keys if you find yourself on an infected web site)

9. RUN SCANDISK

Next we want to cleanup any errors on the drive using Scandisk, so go to Start-My Computer-right click on the C: drive and choose Properties-Tools Tab select the Check Now button-check the Automatically fix system errors-click Start:

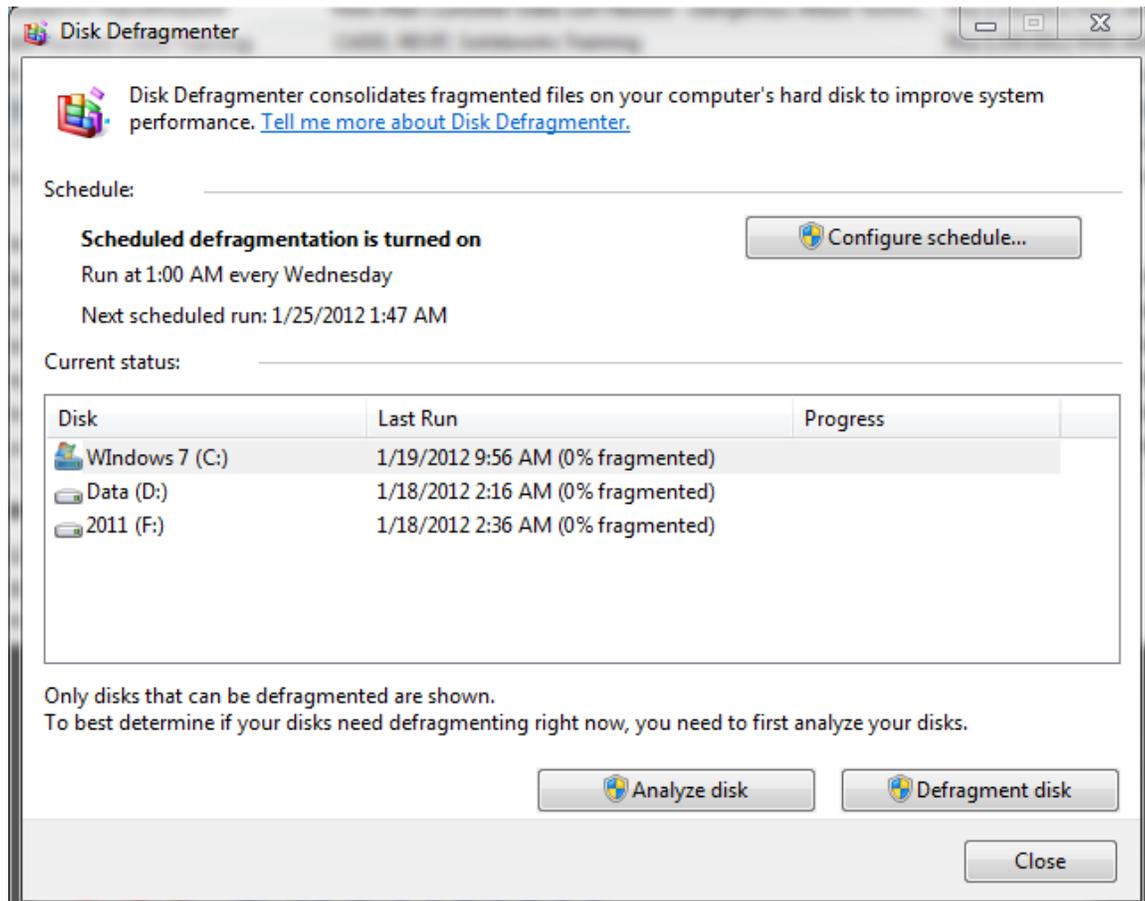


It will let you know it cannot run now and will run at the next boot up, click Ok and restart the computer. Once that is done and the computer has booted back into Windows we can continue to our next step.



10. DEFRAG HARD DRIVE

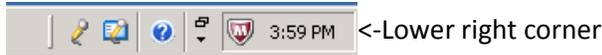
Next we are going to run Defragmenter, Start-My Computer-right click on the C: drive and choose Properties-Tools Tab-click the Defragment Now button-click the Analyze button. It may say that the drive does not need to be Defragmented, go ahead and click the Defragment button, take a break and let it finish, may take 10 minutes to a few hours depending on how much stuff you have on your drive and also how long you've gone without defragmenting your drive. When it is done a little popup box will be displayed, click OK and close the program. **TIP** (If you are using Windows 7 the schedule works well)



11. MSCONFIG

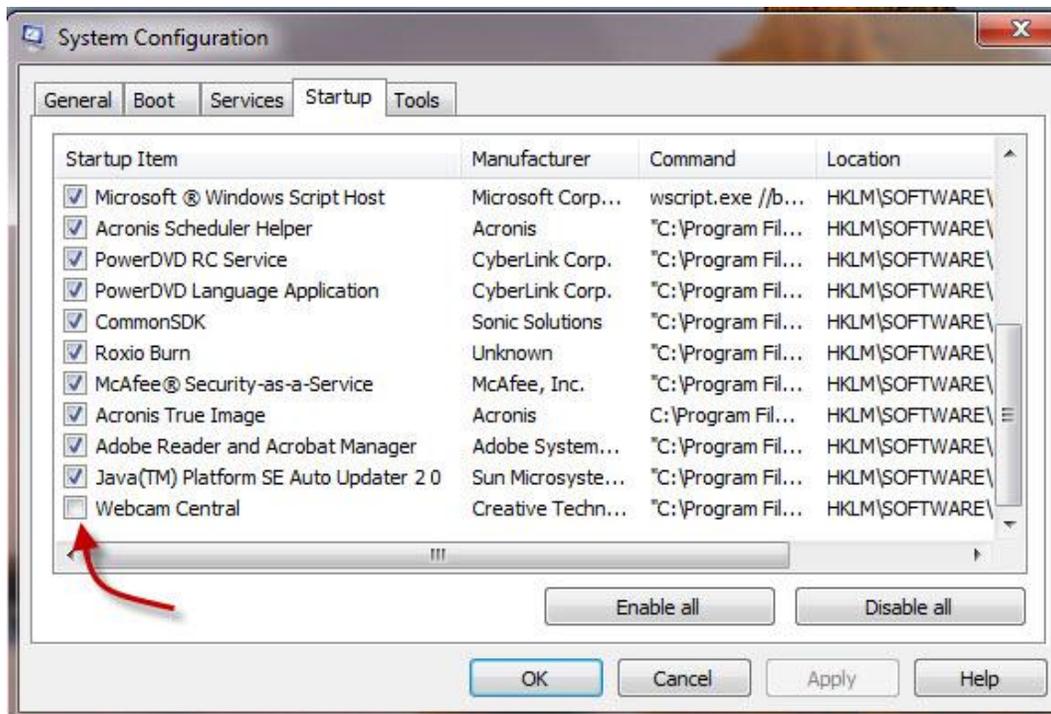
Ok, before we continue to the next step.

Whenever you install a program, knowingly or unknowingly, it may put an Icon in your Taskbar, usually the bottom right corner of your screen:



what are these little icons? These are a quick launch for most programs, do you need these? No, except for your Antivirus Program. Most are placed there when you install a program, usually it will ask to put one there, but sometimes they are installed without asking. These are running in the Background and help to slow down the computer. How do you stop them?

msconfig. Go to Start-Run or Search window type in, msconfig. Go to the Startup tab. These are little programs that startup when your computer boots into Windows, are they needed? Yes, some of them are necessary, but not all of them. To find out if you really need a specific program, open <http://www.Google.com> and type in the name plus .exe at the end of the name, see what the program does, then decide whether it is necessary. I keep my McAfee Security and Acronis checked, McAfee is my antivirus program and Acronis is my backup software. Example: I have a Webcam Central program, which I rarely use, so I uncheck it. Here is an example of msconfig:



Some of these are auto updaters, some just launch the software faster, I like my computer to run as fast as possible so I disable some of these. You will have to reboot the computer, when it boots back up there will be a popup telling you there have been changes, check the box on the bottom left corner then OK and then the msconfig window will not popup every time you bootup. If later you miss one of those startup programs just follow the same steps, but this time check it.

- Your computer should be running much faster now. One more thing to consider is how much RAM or Memory does your computer have. Go to Start-right click Computer or My computer and select Properties for Information, look at the Total Physical Memory (RAM), if you only have 256.00 MB you may want to add more. Windows XP should have a min of 512MB, I recommend at least 1GB, and for Windows 7 I would recommend 2GB.
TIP (Go to this site <http://crucial.com> for help on choosing the proper memory

TIP: Most computers come with a hardware diagnostics CD or image on their computer

Weekly chores:

- Scan System for malware, after updating.
- Clear Browser Temporary Internet Files.

Monthly chores:

- Empty Recycle Bin.
- Empty Windows Temp folder.
- Empty %temp%
- Empty Prefetch
- Run Scandisk.
- Run Defragmenter.
- Full System Virus scan.

Free downloads:

- Microsoft Security Essentials or equivalent antivirus:
<http://windows.microsoft.com/en-US/windows/products/security-essentials>
- Malwarebytes from <http://www.malwarebytes.org>
- Adobe Reader: <http://get.adobe.com/reader/otherversions>
- Adobe Flash: <http://get.adobe.com/flashplayer>
- SUN Java: <http://www.java.com/en>
- Microsoft Compatibility Pack or Viewers
<http://www.microsoft.com/downloads/details.aspx?familyid=941B3470-3AE9-4AEE-8F43-C6BB74CD1466&displaylang=en>
- Word Viewer:
<http://www.microsoft.com/downloads/details.aspx?FamilyID=3657CE88-7CFA-457A-9AEC-F4F827F20CAC&DisplayLang=en>
- Excel Viewer:
<http://www.microsoft.com/downloads/details.aspx?FamilyID=1cd6acf9-ce06-4e1c-8dcf-f33f669dbc3a&displaylang=en>
- PowerPoint Viewer:
<http://www.microsoft.com/downloads/details.aspx?FamilyId=048DC840-14E1-467D-8DCA-19D2A8FD7485&displaylang=en>

This document can be downloaded from: <http://www.sohonets.com/services.html>

Document is call "Computer Maintenance easy to use steps"