Steps to speed up your computer

Unfortunately over time, the speed of computers with Microsoft Windows can decrease. This appears as the system taking more time to respond to a user's actions like opening files, folders, surfing the Internet and other tasks. However, there are things you can do to speed up your computer.

The following is a list of ways you can improve your computer's performance. These steps are intended to be used in order. The key is to do the simplest and least invasive thing first until your system starts responding better.

Steps to Speed Up Your Computer's Performance

1. Make Sure Your Hardware is Sufficient
   If you doing something new with your computer i.e. video editing and it is running slower than usual, it may be that your computer hardware is insufficient for the task. Above and beyond everything you can do with software to optimize the function of your computer, making sure you have the proper hardware to support Windows is critical.

2. Clean Your Desktop
   Is your Windows Desktop dotted with files? Saving files and having lots of shortcuts to programs on your desktop slows your computer. Move any files to you're my Documents and delete any unnecessary shortcuts.

3. Scan Your Windows System for Errors
   An operating system is a collection of files that perform different functions. It is possible, over time, that one or more of these system files has changed or become corrupted. If this happens, the speed of your system may decrease. By using a utility called "System File Checking", it will inspect these files and correct any problem it finds.

   1. Open **My Computer**, and then select the local disk you want to check.
   2. On the File menu, click **Properties**.
   3. On the **Tools** tab, under **Error-checking**, click **Check Now**.
   4. Under **Check disk options**, select the **Scan for and attempt recovery of bad sectors** check box.

4. Scan for Viruses, Spyware and Adware
   Every Windows computer is vulnerable to viruses. Viruses are nasty little programs that cause both major and minor problems for users. Spyware and Adware are programs created by companies to find out more information about customers, so they can better market products to them. Usually these programs are not created for malicious purposes. Spyware and Adware can load into computer memory and slow it down. Periodically scanning and removal of Viruses, Spyware and Adware is a great way to improve computer performance.

   A good free Anti-virus program is Avast. This can be found by online by searching for Avast on www.google.co.uk

5. <u>Uninstall Unused Programs</u>
Over time, you may have accumulated programs on your computer that you do not use. When a program is installed, it creates connections between the program and the operating system. Even if you don't use these programs, they can slow down your system. Removing these programs will free up space on your computer and may speed up your system's performance.

<u>For Windows XP-</u>

1. Click Start, Settings, Control Panel
2. Open **Add or Remove Programs** in Control Panel.
3. Click **Change or Remove Programs**, and then click the program you want to remove. Click **Remove** and follow the on screen instructions.

<u>For Windows 7</u>

1. Click Start, Control Panel
2. Open **Programs & Features**.
3. Click the program you want to remove. Click **Uninstall** and follow the on screen instructions.

Note:- Only delete programs that you have installed and know what they are. Uninstalling the wrong programs can cause problems with your system. If you have any queries, please contact us.

6. <u>Adjust Visual Effects for Better Performance</u>
Windows provides a number of interesting visual effects including animated windows and fading menus. If you do not have enough operating memory (see above number 1), these effects can slow down your computer. Adjusting or reducing visual effects can make a difference.

7. <u>Don't Automatically Start Programs</u>
Programs use operating memory (RAM, also called system resources). Unless you always use these programs, you can keep them from loading at Windows Startup and speed both the booting of your computer and its performance.

1. Click Start, Programs, Startup
2. Right click on the program you wish to remove from automatically starting and click delete. (this is only a shortcut! You are not deleting the program itself.

Note:- Some programs have automatic startup set within the program itself and not in the Startup folder.

8. <u>Defragment Your Hard Drive</u> (After you have tried everything else)
The more information and programs you have on your computer, the more it is likely that Windows has placed parts of the same file in different locations on your hard drive. It may do this for hundreds of files and programs, depending on how much space is available. Defragmenting the hard drive places all information for each file in one place. (The equivalent is sorting a shuffled pack of cards into their suits and in the correct order. Making it quicker to find the card you want). The result can be a faster computer experience.

Important Note:- Before you even try this, backup all your work onto a different computer, hard drive, CD or disk. Also, you should only do this if you have a reliable source of power for your computer. Doing this when

there is power problem in the neighbourhood is not a good idea. If a computer turns off while it is defragmenting a drive, it will create more problems than not defragmenting it in the first place.

Firstly you need to Analyze the drive to see if it needs to be defraged.

1. Open **My Computer**, and then select the local disk you want to check.
2. On the File menu, click **Properties**, Tools
3. Open **Disk Defragmenter.**
4. Click the volume that you want to check for fragmented files and folders, and then click **Analyze**.

   When Disk Defragmenter finishes analyzing the volume, it displays its analysis of the volume in the **Analysis display**. It also displays a dialog box that tells you whether you need to defragment the volume.

5. Click **View Report** to view the analysis report, which displays more detailed volume information and a list of the most fragmented files.
6. If the drive needs defragmenting, run the Defrag. Warning: - dependant on drive size, this can take a long time.

9. Reinstall the Operating System and Programs
    If you have done all the above steps and your computer does not become more responsive, you might consider reinstalling the operating system and programs. This is a scorched earth option - basically you backup all your data and user settings wipe your hard drive clean and re-install the operating system with your original disks. Next, install all your favourite programs and restore all your data and user settings.
    The nice thing about doing this is that you essentially have a new computer, free of years worth of software and registry changes, additions and errors that can turn a fast rabbit of a Windows computer into a slow turtle. The bad thing about this choice is that it takes time and planning to do it correctly. If your PC is 3 to 4 years old and continues to run slower than it did when you purchased it, this might be the only action that will make a significant difference.

If you are unsure about any of the above procedures, please contact us for a quote or visit
www.simplypcsupport.co.uk/Pricing