

W2K on old PC, how to minimize processor and ram usage by OS?

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Hi,

I've an old PC with a 266 mhz CPU and just upgraded to 256MB RAM (though the motherboard can only cache 64MB RAM), running Win 2000 Pro (fully updated).

I've set it up as an MP3 playing 'jukebox' connected to my stereo in the living room and have plugged a wireless card in so it can stream the MP3s which are on a hard disk connected to my wireless router. It will also be used for web browsing and OpenOffice apps.

It's slow EG. OpenOffice apps take 5–10 seconds to load, though both IE and Firefox load faster than that. Once loaded the apps work quite reasonably and responsively.

The problem is that when playing a CD (from the internal CD drive – not streamed over wireless) and with playing some, but not all, MP3s streamed over wireless, is that the occasional crackle occurs. This was much worse when the PC had only 64MB RAM – I upgraded it to 256RAM (which is the max the motherboard supports) – in an attempt to solve the crackle problem. Strangely the crackle problem is much worse playing from the (local) CD drive than it is playing the streamed MP3s.

I don't really want to buy a new motherboard with a faster processor. How can I minimize the processor and RAM usage of the Win 2000 Pro OS? For instance I am sure many services are running that I don't need, but I've no idea which are safe to stop. All advise from you gurus would be greatly appreciated. --Please don't suggest installing Win98 (or suchlike) since my wireless card is compatible with only Win2k and XP.

Finally I should mention that when playing music (I use WinAmp) I close all apps, except ZoneAlarm firewall, D-Link wireless connector, and of course the LAN.

Many, many, thanks and regards, etc..

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