

Re: What's with the file clutter in Windows XP Pro?

Source:

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Carol wrote:

> *I am, and will forever remain, the sole user of my newest
> computer which came loaded with Win XP Pro. In Windows
> Explorer, in the C:\Documents & Settings folder, there are
> 4 sub-directories (folders) one each in my name, Carol,
> Administrator, All Users & Default User. There is also a
> folder for Local Service (which also appears in each of
> the preceding 4 folders). Would it be safe to clean up my
> cluttered file system by deleting all but my folder (i.e.,
> C:\Documents and Settings\Carol {me}) since I am also the
> administrator, all users & default user?*

Windows XP is and will remain a MultiUser OS. If you delete some of the users in the Documents and Settings directory, you will affect your user and possibly other things. It could cause things you had set to go missing and the directories, in most cases, will recreate themselves.

HOW TO: Create and Configure User Accounts in Windows XP

<http://support.microsoft.com/default.aspx?scid=kb:en-us:279783&Product=winxp>

HOW TO: Set, View, Change, or Remove Special Permissions for Files and Folders in Windows XP

<http://support.microsoft.com/default.aspx?scid=kb:en-us:308419&Product=winxp>

Doug's Windows XP Security Console

http://www.dougknox.com/xp/utills/xp_securityconsole.htm

Windows XP is a multi-user OS, even when used by one person only, the fundamentals don't change.

Documents and Settings is the directory that contains your user information/documents/etc. It also contains a few extra directories used by Windows.

One is "Default User" – This is used whenever a new account is created. It bases the initial setup of that account off this directory.

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Another is "All Users" – This is used by.. all users. If you want something to appear on the desktop of every user of the machine, you put it on this users desktop (in the desktop folder.) Etc.

You may also see "Administrator" – depending on your setup, this is the original administrator user and if you know that account's password, you should leave him alone and use him only in an emergency.

You could also (if you have it where you can see ALL files) see "LocalService" and "NetworkService" folders. These are service accounts, normally unused by the standard user.

Should you erase any of the above? No. No reason to. The only ones that a single user will really ever use is the one under their username (ie: whatever username you log in with) and the "All Users" account. If something goes wrong(or you add a new user), the default user will be used (recreated if not there) to create the new account needed. The Administrator account will hopefully never be used and would just be recreated if you logged in as administrator (assuming you even have the user – which you do.) Sometimes your account may be listed as "owner" or "administrator" under the documents and settings folder.. This all depends on how things were setup. The name you use and the name of the folder do NOT have to correspond if the name was changed manually after the account was created initially.

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<- Shenan ->

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