

Re: Any tweaks to speed up games under XP?

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<http://www.tech-archive.net/Archive/WinXP/microsoft.public.windowsxp.games/2004-03/0456.html>

From: Jimmy S. (Private)

Date: 03/13/04

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Hi pjp,

I echo Chris's caution. You should upgrade to a P4 instead of tweaking.
You found one good trick already though, (run high) here's some more...

USE THE FOLLOWING INFO AT YOUR OWN RISK!

I don't really want to provide a tweaking guide, however it's clear that there's a demand, so I'll share some tricks I've used as long as you promise to set a restore point right now. Is that a fair deal? ;-) Here's how to use Windows XP System Restore:
<http://www.microsoft.com/windowsxp/pro/using/howto/gethelp/systemrestore.asp>

I use these methods only for special games such as grudge matches.

A: Setup Hardware Profile for Gaming

Control Panel / System

Hardware Tab / Hardware Profiles button

Copy Profile 1 and rename it Gaming Profile

Leave Profile 1 at the top of the list

Set to Select the first profile in 5 seconds

B: Disable Services for Gaming.

Control Panel / Administrative Tools / Services

For each service listed below do the following:

Right Click / Properties / Log On Tab

Click on Gaming Profile / click Disable Button

Click Apply but Do NOT disable for Profile 1

List of Services: Alerter / Automatic Updates / Computer Browser
Cryptographic Services (Will cause "Logo" Errors when installing SP1 or DX9)
Fast User Switching Compatibility / Help and Support / Messenger
Print Spooler / Remote Registry / Secondary Logon (Run as... will not function)
System Restore Service / Task Scheduler / Terminal Services / Themes
Upload Manager / VMWare Authorization Service (These services only appear if you use VM Ware) / VMWare DHCP Service " " / VMWare NAT Service " "
Windows Image Acquisition (I won't be scanning while playing) / Windows Time.

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* You cannot expect to install games and use windows everyday with the above services disabled. Those are just safe services to disable *WHILE* you're in a game. After the games are over, reboot and use the original Profile 1 again.

C: Disable Page File

Since I have 512 MB Ram I find it faster to use RAM than to page to the HD.
Control Panel / System / Advanced / Performance Settings / Advanced Tab
Virtual Memory Change / Select each drive / click No Paging file and
click SET. ****If you do not click Set it will not accept your change.

* Once you're finished your games turn back on the System Managed page file!

D: Use XP's Firewall Instead of 3rd Party Firewalls

We've already disabled your firewall (Norton's, Zone Alarm, etc.) by disabling Startup programs in step D. Check your services using the method in step A to see if the firewall or antivirus program has services you should disable, i.e. Zone Alarm installs a True Vector service you can disable for the Gaming Profile.

E: Improve Framerates by Lowering Game Eyecandy and Sound

I found that by setting my resolution in Halo to 800x600, and lowering the visual effects, I was able to improve my framerate from 24 to 52 FPS! :-)
This is more improvement than any of the other tweaks provided.
Sound is something that you don't need. Only keep sound settings that will help keep you alive, for example to hear a tank rumbling near you. Music and the sound effects made when you fire your weapons are expensive ear candy.

F: Set Performance Options for Best Performance

Control Panel / System / Advanced / Settings / Visual Effects
Adjust for best performance (remember to change it back after your games).

G: Disable Startup Programs

Start / Run / type msconfig / Startup Tab / Click Disable all button.
You will be prompted to restart, when it restarts you'll have 5 seconds to pick Gaming Profile or it will default to Profile 1 instead.

WARNING – DO NOT CLICK THE SERVICES / DISABLE ALL BUTTON!

*Never touch the Services Tab in msconfig! It allows you to disable ALL services for ALL profiles with the click of one button and Windows won't startup again!!!

Okay, so now I've shared some of the tweaks I've used on my own system. I hope this information will be helpful, and if used properly help you pwn your opps!

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Cheers, Windows XP MVP Shell / User
Jimmy S. <http://mvp.support.microsoft.com>
Game FAQs: [http://support.microsoft.com/default.aspx?scid=FH;\[LN\];gms](http://support.microsoft.com/default.aspx?scid=FH;[LN];gms)
Visit my Zone.com / Gaming Helpsite: <http://nibblesnbits.tk> or Call / Contact
MS Support at: <http://support.microsoft.com/default.aspx?scid=sz;en-us;top>
My advice is donated "AS IS" without warranty; nor do I confer any rights.

"Chris H." <winxpnews@hotmail.com> wrote in message news:eZBPqzRCEHA.3348@TK2MSFTNGP11.phx.gbl...
| Have you tried, instead of "tweaking" what you might think is necessary in
| Services, to run the default? Indexing, for instance, when turned off will

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actually stop some games in their tracks. It is there for a purpose, and that is to make things run smoother and faster. There are a couple web sites and a PC magazine article which make recommendations to "speed up" XP for gaming, but they don't tell the consequences - like turning off Cryptographic Services.

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Chris H.
Microsoft Windows MVP
Associate Expert
Expert Zone - www.microsoft.com/windowsxp/expertzone

"pjp" <pjp_is_located_at_@_hotmail_._com> wrote in message news:u3fQ0uRCEHA.3024@tk2msftngpl3.phx.gbl...

> XP Pro with integrated spl plus all criticals from Update site applied.
> Latest VIA 4-in-1;s applied as first install after OS up and going.
> DirectX9.0b, passes all DXDiag tests and there's "No Problem ..." all
> around.
>
> Tyan Trinity 400 S1854 motherboard
> PIII at 733Mz (to spec)
> 512 megs ram running at 133mz fsb (to spec)
> Radeon 64 DDR VIVO (7200)
> Xpert98 (2nd display multi-monitor)
> two wd hd's, 15 & 40 gigs with plenty free space on each
> Creative SB-PCI128 sound card
>
> 2 Logitech Rumblepads
> 2 Logitech wheels (MOMO Force & Racing)
>
> Mustek flatbed scanner "Twain", (lpt port pass thru model)
> Creative Webcam (also appears as a Twain scanner)
> Fuji digital camera as webcam or Mass Storage Device
>
> 3 printers, 2 Epson inkjets and an old Canon laser
>
> Logitech mouse
> Wacom pressure sensitive tablet
>
> Ethernet card connected to four other older 98SE pc's in-house (TCP/IP and
> Netbuie as protocols, including XP)
> USR Robotics 56K external modem
>
> 2 self-powered external four port USB hubs for all the USB devices. Does
> provide 500Ma spec to every port simultaneously, e.g. no attached device
> shows any kind of problem in use..
>
> The hardware seems stable an there was/is specific XP drivers for it all
> (I
> was surprised I found scanner driver). The ethernet is up and running with
> printers and folders being shared as expected from both sides. I even
> managed to get the Guest account to be able to use a proxy server on one
> of
> the other pc's to connect to the net after giving up in frustration at
> it's
> refusal to allow use of the dialup modem connection even though it's
> specified as "shared by all" by the "Admin" account that set it up (Users
> are ok and can use it). The only problem hardware wise is, I can't get the
> back speakers working off the sound card as there appears to be only XP's
> built-in support for the card.
>
> This is the one thing I've found really makes a difference for games is,
> use

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> batch files to start the game so you can elevate it's priority, e.g. "cmd
> /c
> start /High LinksLauncher.exe" is noticeably faster (as I'd expect).
>
> I feel the basic problem is background "tasks" as Performance under
> Ctrl-Alt-Del shows cpu bouncing from 2 to 13% continually (but randomly in
> magnitude). I've tried to determine exactly what all these various
> services
> do but when you try to research them it seems like the answer becomes a
> circular reference and it's never really explained. In particular, it's
> undetermined what's going on in the background regarding the ethernet.
> There
> seems to be a number of various services that might be doing some type of
> "polling" for shares or something but as they're not really documented I
> have no idea what one's I can turn off etc. at no risk to basically
> mucking
> up what works now (the Guest account can connect to web using a Proxy
> server
> running on one of the other pc's as it "refused" anything to do with the
> dialup modem connection). Basically, I'm very wary of blindly changing
> things under any version of Windows because as often as not "un-changing"
> it
> doesn't bring the system back to what it was (e.g. unknown inadvertant
> consequences).
>
> For example, I have no idea what the "Alerter" service REALLY does, what
> "other features" absolutely require it to be running in order to function
> correctly nor what these "other services" also do. Ask help for "them" and
> you get another reference etc. which eventually seems to lead no-where
> usefull.
>
> I have turned off the obvious, e.g. disk performance monitoring service,
> indexing and the like.
>
> As usually MS's help isn't helpfull, just frustrating.
>
> "Chris Catt" <notknown@ntlworld.com> wrote in message
> news:uhM4JnPCEHA.712@tk2msftngpl3.phx.gbl...
>> Hi, all depends upon your hardware specs, we really need to know your
>> hardware specs before we can give you advice. What we need are cpu -
>> type/speed. motherboard, ram - amount/type, video card. If you have any
>> problems finding this out then here
>> http://www.aida32.hu/aida32-download.php
>> is a good tool to use. Suffice to say that XP hardware requirements are
> much
>> higher than those of win98, therefore if you've not much ram, say 128mbs,
> XP
>> will really need twice that before you get reasonable game performance. I
>> expect Jimmy S will have more to say on this, over to you Jimmy :-)
>> Chris C
>> Chris
>> "pjp" <pjp_is_located_at_@_hotmail_._com> wrote in message
>> news:OiF0SEHCEHA.2308@tk2msftngpl3.phx.gbl...
>> > Just installed XP Pro as dual-boot with existing 98SE.
>> >
>> > Same game (NFS:U) running from same folder (e.g. just created new
> shortcut
>> > under XP) is basically unplayable under XP it's running so slow (slow
>> > motion) at 640x480 where-as under 98SE I can run it acceptably at
>> > 1024x768.
>> > All other settings the same including under Properties DirectX
>> > settings.
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| >> > Links 2003 and Flight Sim 2004 seem the same but not so exaggerated,  
| >> > probably because they're not high speed "action" type games.  
| >> >  
| >> > Is this typical? I'm running same revision drivers for the Radeon, e.g.  
| >> Cat  
| >> > 4.3.  
| >> >  
| >> > I'm hoping it's all the crap running in the background so wondering if  
| >> > there's any site(s) document what all that crap actually does as MS's  
| > help  
| >> > doesn't even try to explain what they actually "do" in most cases.  
| >> >  
| >> >  
| >>  
| >>  
| >  
| >  
|
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