

## Re: Problem running applications

**Source:**

<http://www.tech-archive.net/Archive/WinXP/microsoft.public.windowsxp.general/2004-06/13863.html>

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**From:** Mario (*mz.silva\_at\_DONTWANTSPAMmail.pt*)

**Date:** 06/13/04

Date: Sun, 13 Jun 2004 16:44:54 +0100

Hi Stuart,

Windows XP has two main types of user accounts: administrators and limited users.

Administrators have full privileges on the system; limited users cant do some things, like replace system files, running configuration tools (like msconfig, regedit, administration console) changing user accounts, and running old software or software that requires full privileges.

What user account type should you use? Most people should have two user accounts, one with administrator powers to install/uninstall stuff, and make system configurations, or run utilities that require full access; and another main account for running usual programs. For the normal daywork all users should stay logged in on a limited account, with much less powers than an administrator. Why? Because is much more safe to use the PC like that. If some new wild virus or trojan can ever run on your computer, and you are logged in as administrator, it can do anything on the system (delete all your files, spy you, steal your passwords, serial numbers, credit card info, or setup your PC as a child porno web server, or even worst). Even some buggy game or application can trash your Registry and force you to reinstall everything if you usually run as administrator. If you run with limited user account, almost all these risks are gone. Of course, good practices should be followed to complete the security (antivirus, firewall, windowsupdate, dont running untrusted software, backups, etc); but not running as administrator is very important to highly mitigate the severe consequences run a nasty program may have.

Why some software, such as old programs and games, require administrator privileges? Well, that's because these programs are old and dull; was designed thinking on Windows 95/98/Me, or just because the programmers were not good enough to find a workarround. For instance, some old programs write settings under C:\Program Files\AppName. Under Windows XP, by default with a limited account, files under Program Files subfolders cant be replaced. Because these dumb programs were not well designed, when they fail to save the settings fail by "unhandled exception" and crash.

What to do then, about these old programs? They can be upgraded with newer versions if available, or replaced with other programs with better support for Windows XP. If that is not possible, then you may continue to run the old programs by right clicking the icon, choosing "Run As", then choosing your administrator account and typing the password. Yes, that is not so easy as just double-click, but it's price to pay for getting at the same time better security and running old programs that have no newer versions or possible replacement. For the extreme case of an user who only plays old (Win98) games, then he may go with administrator privileges all the time, but in that case paying the security penalty. There is always a tradeof.

Go to Control Panel, User Accounts, and see if you can create a new account. If you can, you are logged in as administrator; if you cant, then you are a limited user. If you are a limited user, then someone is the administator... maybe you have another account, or someone else who also uses that computer, or that the PC is on a network (school, office, etc) where there is a network administator. When logged in as administrator use Control Panel to make sure you have two accounts: one with full powers that IS NOT your default user account; and the main account you will use every day with Limited user powers.

If you disabled Windows XP simple file sharing and started to mess around with security settings, then its hard to put things back as it was; better to try System Restore, or if that doesn't work then reinstall Windows.

Hope this helps.

Regards,

Mario

"Stuart McDonald" <stuart\_w\_mcdonald@hotmail.com> wrote in message news:1bf4201c45155\$625823b0\$a001280a@phx.gbl...

- > *When I attempt to run any application, I get an error*
- > *stating that the executable cannot be found. However,*
- > *when I go into Explore the application file does exist.*
- >
- > *After some investigation, I found that if I right click*
- > *on the icon, select run as from the sub menu, and then*
- > *deselect the check box "Protect my computer and data from*
- > *unauthorised program activity", I can run the application.*
- >
- > *The last thing I did on the computer was to install*
- > *Norton Antivirus.*
- >
- > *Does anybody know how to disable this option, and allow*
- > *me to run all programs as normal. Please note, even after*
- > *taking this option off, I am unable to run any*
- > *administrator programs, like regedit or user accounts.*
- >
- > *Thanks in advance*
- > *Stuart*
- >