

Keep Windows XP from getting corrupted by app installs

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Does anyone know of a list of best practices or third party tool(s) for safely installing and completely uninstalling applications in Windows XP? I want to be able to install applications into Windows XP so that if the app were to corrupt my Windows installation, I can remove it completely and restore my Windows XP back to a good state.

I've installed hundreds, maybe thousands of apps on Windows XP platforms. I've tried all sorts of methods for installing apps. These methods include:

" Running Windows in a clean boot configuration:

<http://support.microsoft.com/kb/310353>

" Creating a system restore before each installation

" Using tools that monitor installs and supposedly provide a way to uninstall apps like Advanced Uninstaller Pro:

<http://www.innovative-sol.com/uninstaller/index.htm>

" Etc., etc.

I ask this because Windows XP's design allows applications to do whatever they want. Consequently it becomes corrupt sometimes in a short time, sometimes over a long time.

I hoped that installing apps while only critical apps and services were running (clean boot) would allow for more reliable installs. If it does, I sure haven't experienced that. My Windows XP got corrupt in only a month and a half!

Creating system restore points is almost a joke. First, there's a lot of stuff that doesn't get saved. Then it's sequential and each restore point relies on the other. An app installed 3 apps ago requires you to uninstall all three apps first, then restore the saved point made prior to the 3rd app's installation. Then sometimes you find out your system restores are corrupt and they won't work anyway!

Install monitors and uninstallers also don't get everything. When I run these tools to get the most thorough results, they keep taking longer and longer to monitor the installation of apps, eventually resulting in hours to get one app installed!

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If you don't install many apps, you probably don't experience these problems. But after 30+ years of computer use and 21 of those using Windows, I have accumulated a set of apps I use regularly. By the way, the apps I do use are up-to-date and intended to run on Windows XP.

There are hundreds of issues about this topic. I've tried many other procedures and searched the Internet for more information, but have had little luck.

You should also know that I do daily backups using Genie Backup Manager. These backups are for applications settings and data. I also perform daily image backups using Acronis TrueImage. I keep my data, including favorites and my desktop on a drive separate from where Windows is installed. If you have any solid knowledge about Windows installations, I hope you will post it here. Who knows, we may come up with the first definitive Windows applications installation list there is!

Thanks for your help,
RiteGuy