

Re: newbie question...how do I add a computer to a network.

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Source:

http://www.tech-archive.net/Archive/WinXP/microsoft.public.windowsxp.network_web/2007-12/msg00239.html

- *From:* Malke <notreally@xxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxx>
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John wrote:

I'm using WinXPsp2 and have a wireless modem.

I had a desktop computer attached to the modem by wire and a laptop attached to the modem wirelessly. I had a little network.

I formatted the HD on the desktop.

Now I want to re-add the desktop to my little network. My desktop is attached to to modem and I can get the web etc.

But the two computers can't "see" each other.

For XP, start by running the Network Setup Wizard on all machines (see caveat in Item A below).

Problems sharing files between computers on a network are generally caused by 1) a misconfigured firewall; or 2) inadvertently running two firewalls such as the built-in Windows Firewall and a third-party firewall; and/or 3) not having identical user accounts and passwords on all Workgroup machines; 4) trying to create shares where the operating system does not permit it.

For XP and Windows 2003 Server, MVP Hans-Georg Michna has an excellent small network troubleshooter. It may also be useful with Vista.

<http://winhlp.com/wxnet.htm>

Here are some general networking tips for home/small networks:

A. Configure firewalls on all machines to allow the Local Area Network (LAN) traffic as trusted. With Windows Firewall, this means allowing File/Printer Sharing on the Exceptions tab. Normally running the Network Setup Wizard on XP will take care of this for those machines. The only "gotcha" is that this will turn on the XPSP2 Windows Firewall. If you aren't running a third-party firewall or have an antivirus with "Internet Worm Protection" (like Norton 2006/07) which acts as a firewall, then you're fine. With third-party firewalls, I usually configure the LAN allowance with an IP range. Ex. would be 192.168.1.0-192.168.1.254. Obviously you would substitute your correct subnet. Do not run more than one firewall.

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B. For ease or organization, put all computers in the same Workgroup. This is done from the System applet in Control Panel, Computer Name tab.

C. Create matching user accounts and passwords on all machines. You do not need to be logged into the same account on all machines and the passwords assigned to each user account can be different; the accounts/passwords just need to exist and match on all machines. If you wish a machine to boot directly to the Desktop (into one particular user's account) for convenience, you can do this. The instructions at this link work for both XP and Vista:

Configure Windows to Automatically Login (MVP Ramesh) – <http://windowsxp.mvps.org/Autologon.htm>

D. If one or more of the computers is XP Pro or Media Center:

1. If you need Pro's ability to set fine-grained permissions, turn off Simple File Sharing (Folder Options>View tab) and create identical user accounts/passwords on all computers.

2. If you don't care about using Pro's advanced features, leave the Simple File Sharing enabled. Simple File Sharing means that Guest (network) is enabled. This means that anyone without a user account on the target system can use its resources. This is a security hole but only you can decide if it matters in your situation.

E. Create shares as desired. XP Home does not permit sharing of users' home directories (My Documents) or Program Files, but you can share folders inside those directories. A better choice is to simply use the Shared Documents folder.

Malke

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