

Re: Partitioning a 100gb hard drive as 2 separate drives

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http://www.tech-archive.net/Archive/WinXP/microsoft.public.windowsxp.setup_deployment/2008-05/msg00020.htm

- *From:* "Shenan Stanley" <newshelper@xxxxxxxxxx>
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Robbywon wrote:

I just bought a new 100GB hard drive for my old laptop which has been refurbished. I need to split the hard disk for a C and a D drive. One for Windows XP, the other for personal files. When I load the XP disk and I get to the partition screen, it ask me how many KB I want to allocate for XP and shows that I have about 95MB's available. I didn't split the drive yet because I didn't understand the question. How can I have a 100GB drive and the available disk space says only 95KB. My desktop uses about 30+GB for all programs on the C: drive and I'de like to allow about 35 to 40GB for programs on the laptop and have the rest for files and backup stuff. I am asking because I heard that once I partion a hard drive I can't unpartiion it. I've read Microsofts articles on this issue but no one seems to be able to clear up this small conundrum. Any response will be greatly appreciated.

First – what do you hope to gain?

I know you say you will be putting your OS and installed applications on the 'c partition' and then your data (stuff you make using the os and applications) on the 'd partition'. What do you think this gives you?

Sure– if *nothing* goes wrong with the hardware, you can technically wipe out the 'c partition' when you want and install Windows XP and your applications again – leaving your 'data' alone and intact – but given the nature of your question – it does not look like this has been a concern in the past nor is it likely to be a concern in the future for you. ;-)

Second – it is not entirely true that once you partition a hard disk drive you cannot change it up. Yes – it is true with Windows XP alone, but there are third party partitioning tools that can do this for you and/or third party imaging applications that would allow you to take an image of the 'c partition' and the 'd partition' and then – after repartitioning with whatever tool you feel comfortable with – apply said images to the new partitioning scheme...

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Third – before you even go any further – you need to get your terminology straight. Perhaps you were just nervous posting a question or something, but you went from having a 100GB (GigaByte) hard disk drive to only having 95MB (MegaByte) free when you went to partition it (95GB would probably be about right for a 100GB retail drive for formatted space available) to only 95KB (KiloByte) available at one point. In other words – you kept stepping down a full factor of 1000 in a given sentence. 1GB = ~1,000MB = ~1,000,000KB. (It's actually 1024, but...)

Then you say that, "My desktop uses about 30+GB for all programs on the C: drive..." <- really? I have installed a LOT of systems... Systems with Windows XP and the following applications: AutoDesk (AutoCAD), MatLab, SPSS, Adobe CS3 product line (Photoshop, etc), Office 2007 (including Project and Visio), SAS, WordPerfect, 3D Studio MAX, Adobe Acrobat Professional and so on – (all the little plugins and normal stuff) and not gotten to a 30GB full partition *without* the user files. My bet is that out of that 30GB – the majority is taken up by the folder "%SystemDrive%\Documents and Settings\" (or C:\Documents and Settings\ for most people.) Which means "The files and stuff *you* created using the OS and applications installed upon the machine." Your stuff, your pictures, movies, internet favorites (bookmarks), documents, spreadsheets, drawings, databases, emails, contacts, etc and so on...

Personally – I think unless you plan on formatting the system and rebuilding it from scratch periodically (and often actually) – you are gaining little to nothing from a partitioning scheme such as you are proposing. Even if you partitioned it 40GB for "c" and 55GB for "d" (which is about what I would suggest the split be) – unless you do things just right (redirect your desktop, favorites, email application of your choice's local files and "my documents" to the "d" drive, etc) – it will probably turn out you are keeping most of your stuff on the C drive anyway and even if you do it 'just right', unless you wipe out the 'c partition' every so often – the only thing you might have accomplished is a simpler backup scheme. If the hard disk drive fails – hardware failure – it is unlikely it will just fail in such a way that your data will remain safe on the second partition. You will need good and consistently taken backups. ;~)

My opinion – given what you have in this entire thread so far and not just the original post I am responding to is to *not* partition the drive into multiple parts. Create a single 'all consuming' partition. Use the 95GB it shows you and create a single partition and format it and install Windows XP and all your programs onto it. Then purchase an external USB hard disk drive and start backing up either certain folders or the entire machine or BOTH to that external drive on a schedule you can maintain realistically and that makes you comfortable that if the worst happens – you will have the majority of your stuff safely tucked away.

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