

CLEAN UP A MESSY DESKTOP IN WINDOWS XP

Beginners' Kaffee Klatch
Presented by Bill Wilkinson
September 20, 2008

Do you have desktop icons all over the place? You can cause each of them to pop into a grid block that is in closest proximity to the icon. (The desktop grid is made up of invisible vertical and horizontal lines that form neatly organized columns and rows.) To activate this procedure:

1. Right click on a blank area of the desktop.
2. Click on **Arrange Icons**.
3. Select **Align to Grid**.

You can also rearrange your desktop icons so that they will appear in neat columns and rows along the invisible grid, beginning with the column along the left side of the desktop and working to the right.

1. Right click on a blank area of the desktop.
2. Click on **Arrange Icons**.
3. Select **Auto Arrange**.

You can also arrange the icons by Name, Type, Date and Size.

If you insist on having many shortcut icons on your desktop and are running out of room, you may wish to run the **Desktop Cleanup Wizard**. The Wizard displays a list of the desktop icons that have not been used for 60 days or more, enabling you to automatically move those icons that you don't want on your desktop to an **Unused Desktop Shortcuts** folder. You can retrieve icons you have removed by opening the Unused Desktop Shortcuts folder on your desktop.

Clear the **Run Desktop Cleanup Wizard every 60 days** check box if you don't want the wizard to run automatically every two months. To activate/deactivate the Desktop Cleanup Wizard:

1. Right click on a blank area of the desktop.
2. Click on **Arrange Icons**.
3. Select/Deselect **Run Desktop Cleanup Wizard**.

If you want to have a desktop that is free of all icons, but yet have all of them immediately available to you, follow these steps:

1. Right click on a blank area of the desktop.
2. Click on **Arrange Icons**.
3. Deselect **Show Desktop Icons**. This action will clear all icons from the desktop. To restore the icons to their previous desktop locations, simply click on **Show Desktop Icons** again. (The button acts as a toggle on/off switch.)

If you wish to access all your desktop icons from your Taskbar:

1. Right-click on a blank space on the Taskbar.
2. Move up to Toolbars, and then select Desktop. This action will place a Desktop tab on the Taskbar and give you ready access to all the Desktop Icons that you made invisible by following the first three steps above.

You can **remove** an individual desktop icon by right-clicking the icon and then clicking Delete.