



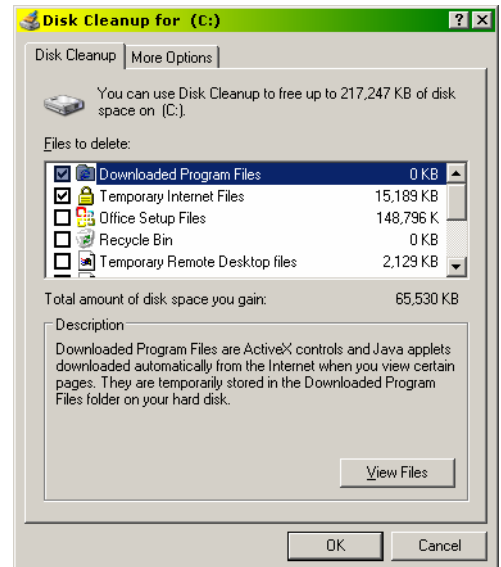
Tune Up your PC 2007-05

Making some adjustments and utilize the build-in tools in Windows XP, you can tune up your pc. Follow these simple maintenance tasks periodically your pc will perform like a well oiled machine.

First, you want to delete temporary files. Open My Computer, right click Local Disk, then click properties. On the General tab, click the Disk Cleanup button. After a few moments, Disk Cleanup dialog box opens. Select ALL the files, Press OK, and then delete them.

Second, remove any un-used windows components and programs. Click on the More Options Tab on Disk Cleanup dialog. The wizard will guide you through the steps. After you are done, restart your computer.

Third, take a look at what remains on your computer that runs upon start up. Windows XP comes with the System Configuration tool. To start it, go to Start; click Run, and type **msconfig**. The system configuration wizard will start.



Open up the Startup Tab. All the programs listed on this page runs when the computer is turned on. How would you know which ones are essential and which ones' aren't? Reference Paul Collin's list <http://www.sysinfo.org/startuplist.php> Paul Collins' Startup Applications List to determine which programs you want to start automatically. If you aren't sure a program is unneeded—leave it be!

One more place to clean up, C:\Windows\Prefetch folder. Windows XP can "prefetch" portions of data and applications that are used frequently. This makes programs appear to load faster when called upon by the user. Over time, the prefetch folder may become overloaded with references to files and applications no longer in use. There is nothing critical is in this folder, and the entire contents are safe to delete.

After your system is all cleaned up, you need to defrag your hard drive. This may be a long process, which I usually kick off before I head out to the golf course. Open My Computer, right click Local Disk, then click properties. On the Tools tab, click on the Defragment Now button, and then press Analyze. The wizard will suggest defrag now or wait.

If you still don't see any improvement, you may have spyware and/or virus on your pc. If you don't have AntiVirus / Spyware removal tools, you need to purchase one. This is like locking your house door so no unwanted visitors can come in. Any of the major software vendors will be fine, they all provide similar product and service.

If after installing the Anti Virus/spyware tool, you still doesn't see an improvement, you should consider starting from scratch. First, follow our backup procedure and backup your files. Then use the restore CD that came with your computer to restore it to its virgin state. After you restore it, the first software you install needs to be the Anti Virus/Spyware program. Next, restore your files to your 'reborn' pc, install your applications, and you are good to go.

Next month, we will take a look of some fun and useful Powertools provided by Microsoft.