

## Windows Desktop

The desktop is a special Windows folder, the only one whose content is displayed when all windows are minimized. Customize desktop icon dimensions in Windows.

Windows Vista introduced a new icon size (or dimension), much larger than the icons dimensions available in XP. By default, Windows uses the "Medium Icons" size on your desktop. If you want to see more icons on your desktop, or simply if you prefer larger icons, Windows lets you customize their size with a couple clicks.

To modify the dimension or change the size of your desktop icons in Windows, right-click in an empty area of the desktop, a choose "View": this will unfold the sub-menu that controls icon sizes.

Choose between "Large Icons", "Medium Icons" (the default in Windows), or "Classic Icons".

An even simpler and quicker way to change the size of icons on your desktop in Windows is to use the wheel of your mouse: minimize all your windows to see your desktop and its icons. For good measure, click somewhere on the desktop to make sure it has the focus. Now hold down the control key on your keyboard ("Ctrl") and mouse-wheel up or down: when you scroll up, your desktop icons become bigger; when you scroll down (while holding the Ctrl key); makes your desktop icons smaller. Here you go, a quick tip and mouse/keyboard shortcut to resize your desktop icons!

Auto Arrange desktop icons in Windows.

Windows "Auto Arrange" setting for desktop icons can be puzzling at first: if Auto Arrange is selected, will decide how to place them on the screen. All icons will be one next to another. If you try to move an icon somewhere else on the desktop, it will move right back from where it came. Put differently, Windows decides for you how icons will be arranged on your desktop.

To enable or disable Auto Arrange for you icons, right-click in an empty area of your desktop, and choose "View". A sub-menu will fly out, and show the various display options for your desktop. Click Auto Arrange, and it will toggle the setting: if it was initially turned off, it will now be enabled (and vice versa).

Disable Auto Arrange if you want Windows to let you freely move your desktop icons around. Keep in mind that if you later choose to re-enable Auto Arrange, Window's desktop will be completely re-organized regardless of the order and placement in which you had icons on your desktop.

Align desktop icons manually.

Windows lets you of course manually align desktop icons as you see fit: if the desktop icons revert to a different position, this simply means that the "Align to grid" option is enabled, which instructs Windows to auto-align desktop icons for you. See the next section to enable or disable auto arrangement of icons on your desktop.

Align-to-Grid option for desktop icons.

Windows never shows an actual "grid" on your desktop; this notion of virtual grid determines whether Windows will automatically align an icon horizontally and vertically with the invisible grid.

Turn on or disable Align-to-Grid in Windows "Align to Grid" is turned on if you move and drop an icon on your desktop, and it "snaps" to the nearest alignment. To turn on or disable the Align to Grid option, right-click in an empty area of your desktop, and click on the View menu; click "Align to Grid" to turn the feature on or off.

You can always tell whether Align to Grid is turned on or off by looking at the left of the menu item: if a check mark is visible, the feature is enabled; otherwise, it is currently disabled. The same applies to Windows Auto Arrange setting.

Temporarily viewing your desktop icons in custom sort order.

View the content of your desktop in Windows Explorer, Windows gives you an easy way to get a custom view of the files, folders, programs, shortcuts (or "icons" for short) on your desktop. Click on the Start button, and choose Run :( in 7 Run is found in Start-Accessories) in the Run window that opened, type the word desktop, and hit Enter (or click OK). This instructs Windows to open your desktop as regular folder in Windows Explorer.

Viewing your desktop in Windows Explorer.

Windows Explorer lets you search and sort the content your folders (including the Desktop, which is just a special folder), without affecting the folder itself. In other words: using this method, you can re-order the display of your

desktop icons in Windows Explorer without affecting the icons on the desktop you see when all windows are minimized.

Sorting your desktop icons.

To sort your desktop icons in Windows, right-click on an empty area of the desktop and choose "Sort By" - a sub-menu will appear, containing "Name", "Size", "Type", and "Date modified". These are the four parameters by which you can sort your icons (files, shortcuts, special icons, etc.)

The Sort By command for desktop icons in Windows behaves the same way as Windows Explorer: to sort your desktop icons by name, choose "Sort By", and then "Name". Your icons are now sorted alphabetically, by name. To invert the sort order (Z-A instead of A-Z), just repeat the procedure: choose "Sort By", and click "Name" - your icons sort order has now been inverted.

Show or hide desktop icons in Windows.

This setting only applies to the desktop as you see it when all windows have been minimized: viewing the desktop in Windows Explorer, as any other folder, will still behave as a normal folder. Hiding your desktop icons has several benefits: first, Windows boots faster when desktop icons are hidden, especially if you have a large number of files on the desktop; second, accidentally moving or deleting a file on your desktop becomes much harder; finally, this is a good way to admire your desktop wallpaper through an uncluttered desktop!

Display or hide your desktop icons

To show or hide icons on your desktop in Windows, right-click in an empty area of the desktop and choose "View" - the sub-menu that appears contains a "Show Desktop Icons" menu item.

By default, desktop icons are visible in Windows, and clicking "Show Desktop Icons" toggles their visibility.

If a checkmark appears next to "Show Desktop Icons", but no icons are displayed on your desktop, it means that there are no files or folders on the desktop, and that Windows has been configured to show none of the standard desktop icons (Network, Control Panel, Recycle Bin, Internet Explorer...)

My desktop icons disappeared! (Desktop icons not showing or missing)

Are your desktop icons "missing"? With just a couple clicks, you will be able to restore all your icons the way they were; you only hid them unintentionally (or someone played a prank on you). Just right-click on your desktop, choose "View", and click "Show Desktop Icons". That's it! It is possible that your desktop icons were accidentally hidden: these icons were never missing, or never disappeared, they were just optionally, and temporarily invisible.

Viewing hidden desktop icons in Windows.

By default; desktop icons are visible on your desktop: if you no longer see your icons, or if you want to see the content of your desktop without displaying the icons on the actual desktop, Windows lets you see the content of your desktop without changing your desktop icon visibility settings:

Use the Start Menu and go to Start > Run; (in 7 Run is found in Start-Accessories) in the Run window that opened, type desktop and hit Enter (or click OK). Windows will open your desktop and reveal its content inside a Windows Explorer window (a good opportunity to remind ourselves that Window's desktop is just a special folder).

Show or hide common icons on the desktop in Windows.

How to customize which system icons should be visible or hidden on the desktop in Windows. This option already existed in Windows XP, but you will access it differently in Windows Vista/7. The desktop icons these settings affect include Computer, Network, your profile folder, and the Recycle Bin.

Show or hide system icons on the desktop.

You can customize which system icons Windows displays on the desktop.

Locate desktop settings and options in Window's Control Panel To access these settings, open the Control Panel (click the "Control Panel" button in the Start Menu). In the Control Panel's search field, type "desktop": this will display all options relating to the desktop (or containing the word "desktop" in their description).

Show or hide common icons on the desktop in Windows.

One of the first options displayed after you filtered settings by typing "desktop", is the "Show or hide common icons on the desktop" link. This will launch the "Desktop Icon Settings" window.

The top section of the Desktop Icon Settings window contains a series of checkboxes; by default, Windows displays all of the following system icons on your desktop: Computer, User's Files (which is your profile folder), Network, Recycle Bin, and Control Panel. Simply check or uncheck the checkboxes of the icons you would like to show or hide from the desktop. Once you are done, click OK, and close the Control Panel. These changes take effect immediately.