

BASICS & BEYOND -- SESSION # 6

DISK CLEANUP

As we use our computer over a period of time we download miscellaneous program files, temporary internet files, setup log files, temporary files, etc., that are no longer necessary, or required, in the operation of our computer. These files can take up an inordinate amount of disk space, and may even slow down the operation of our computer. It is beneficial to our computer if we periodically "cleanup" (eliminate) these files.

There are several places we can go to eliminate these files. We can use the **Disk Cleanup** found in **System Tools**, and if you are using Win Internet Explorer you can also use **Internet Options** found under **Tools** on the Menu Bar.

To use Disk Cleanup go to **Start > All Programs > Accessories > System Tools > Disk Cleanup**. After Disk Cleanup opens you will be asked which drive you want to cleanup. If you have more than one drive you can clean each one, if you desire. But definitely clean the drive that contains your operating system, which normally is the "C" drive. Select the drive that you want to clean and click OK. Depending on how long it has been since you have performed this function it may take from a minute to a several minutes to find and list the files that can be eliminated. Once the files have been listed it is normally ok to select and delete all the files shown. Click OK

To cleanup files listed under Internet Options open your browser and click on **Tools** on the menu bar and then click on **Internet Options**. These directions pertain to ver.7 of Win. Internet Explorer. Ver.6 may vary slightly.

Once Internet Options opens be sure that the **General Tab** is selected. On the General Tab page look for "**Browsing History**" and click delete. This will not delete anything at this point, but will open further selections and options.

Five options will be listed. It is suggested that you delete Temporary Internet Files and History Files, at a minimum. Select others as you desire.

DISK DEFRAGMENTATION

Remember, after completing a Disk Cleanup you may want to also do a Disk Defrag. Some files and programs get scattered all over your hard drive, and seldom are written to the hard drive in a continuous manner. By defragging you will put the bits and pieces back together. This will result in shorter "seek times" when you ask your computer to find specific info on the hard drive. **Disk Defragmenter** is also located in the **System Tools** folder

SETTING A NEW HOME PAGE

Setting up a new home page for your browser is really easy. First, go to the web page that you would like to use as your home page. Once you are there click on "**Tools**" on the menu bar at the top of your screen. When the Tools menu opens click on "**Internet Options**". After Internet Options opens click on "**Use Current**" which is listed under "Home Page". Then click on "**Apply**" at the bottom and your new home page should open the next time you open your browser.

SECURITY & PRIVACY

Have you checked your Security & Privacy settings lately? Are they set to where you want them, and give you the protection that you need and desire? With you web browser open click on **"Tools"** on the menu bar and on the drop down menu click on **"Internet Options"**. Check the settings on both the **Security** tab and the **Privacy** tab. I suggest that you put your settings, at a minimum, to Medium and preferably to Medium High.

SOFTWARE & HARDWARE UPDATES

I assume that every computer owner/user has set the parameters to receive automatic updates from Microsoft, or at least to receive notification of updates that are available. To turn on automatic updates, or to check your settings, in Win-XP open **"Control Panel"** and then click on **"Security Center"**. When Security Center opens it will show your settings for Firewall, Auto Updates & Virus Protection. All three should show **"On"**. At the bottom of the Security Center page you will see **"Automatic Updates"**. Clicking on this will give you options as to how you handle your updates. For most users Automatic should be selected. Make your selection and then click **"Apply."** The procedure for Vista users is basically the same, however, you will find **"Automatic Updates"** at the top left corner of the screen.

Have you checked for hardware updates for your printer? Microsoft will often have these listed as available for downloading when you go to the MS download center, but don't count on it. You should periodically go to your printer's homepage and check to see if the manufacturer has updates available. This will also apply to other hardware that you have installed in your computer.

MICROSOFT UPDATES

Microsoft has released a series of updates listed below that you should install onto your computer.

- 1 – Windows XP service pack # 3 (SP 3)
- 2 – Vista service pack # 1 (SP 1)
- 3 – Internet Explorer 7 for Win-XP, service pack # 2 (SP 2) Do not download if you are not using IE-7.

If you do not have these updates on your computer please consider doing so. The updates will "plug" security flaws and fix items with "bugs", among other things. They can all be found at the Microsoft download center www.microsoft.com/downloads or you can just Google **"ms download center"**.

BACKING UP YOUR DATA

For detailed information on how to back up files, pics, etc., see the notes from Session # 3. They are available at www.computerbooters.org. Scroll down on the left side of the home page to **SIG Notes**, click on **Basic** and click **Session # 3**.