The bestselling Windows XP book, fully updated to better answer your XP questions

Windows® XP FOR DUMMIES®

2nd Edition

Revised with expanded e-mail, security, and upgrading answers

A Reference for the Rest of Us!®

FREE eTips at dummies.com®

Andy Rathbone
Expert author of Upgrading & Fixing PCs For Dummies *and* TiVo For Dummies

The bestselling Windows XP book, fully updated to better answer your XP questions

Windows® XP FOR DUMMIES®

2nd Edition

Revised with expanded e-mail, security, and upgrading answers

A Reference for the Rest of Us!®

FREE eTips at dummies.com®

Andy Rathbone
Expert author of Upgrading & Fixing PCs For Dummies *and* TiVo For Dummies

Windows® XP For Dummies®, 2nd Edition

by Andy Rathbone

Wiley Publishing, Inc.

Windows® XP For Dummies®, 2nd Edition

Published by
Wiley Publishing, Inc.
111 River St.
Hoboken, NJ 07030-5774
www.wiley.com

Copyright © 2004 by Wiley Publishing, Inc.,
Indianapolis, Indiana

Published by Wiley Publishing, Inc., Indianapolis, Indiana

Published simultaneously in Canada

No part of this publication may be reproduced, stored in a retrieval system or transmitted in any form or by any means, electronic, mechanical, photocopying, recording, scanning or otherwise, except as permitted under Sections 107 or 108 of the 1976 United States Copyright Act, without either the prior written permission of the Publisher, or authorization through payment of the appropriate per-copy fee to the Copyright Clearance Center, 222 Rosewood Drive, Danvers, MA 01923, (978) 750-8400, fax (978) 646-8600. Requests to the Publisher for permission should be addressed to the Legal Department, Wiley Publishing, Inc., 10475 Crosspoint Blvd., Indianapolis, IN 46256, (317) 572-3447, fax (317) 572-4355, e-mail: `brandreview@wiley.com`.

Trademarks: Wiley, the Wiley Publishing logo, For Dummies, the Dummies Man logo, A Reference for the Rest of Us!, The Dummies Way, Dummies Daily, The Fun and Easy Way, Dummies.com, and related trade dress are trademarks or registered trademarks of John Wiley & Sons, Inc. and/or its affiliates in the United States and other countries, and may not be used without written permission. Microsoft is a registered trademark of Microsoft Corporation. All other trademarks are the property of their respective owners. Wiley Publishing, Inc., is not associated with any product or vendor mentioned in this book.

LIMIT OF LIABILITY/DISCLAIMER OF WARRANTY: The publisher and the author make no representations or warranties with respect to the accuracy or completeness of the contents of this work and specifically disclaim all warranties, including without limitation warranties of fitness for a particular purpose. No warranty may be created or extended by sales or promotional materials. The advice and strategies contained herein may not be suitable for every situation. This work is sold with the understanding that the publisher is not engaged in rendering legal, accounting, or other professional services. If professional assistance is required, the services of a competent professional person should be sought. Neither the publisher nor the author shall be liable for damages arising herefrom. The fact that an organization or Website is referred to in this work as a citation and/or a potential source of further information does not mean that the author or the

publisher endorses the information the organization or Website may provide or recommendations it may make. Further, readers should be aware that Internet Websites listed in this work may have changed or disappeared between when this work was written and when it is read.

For general information on our other products and services or to obtain technical support, please contact our Customer Care Department within the U.S. at 877-762-2974, outside the U.S. at 317-572-3993, or fax 317-572-4002.

Wiley also publishes its books in a variety of electronic formats. Some content that appears in print may not be available in electronic books.

Library of Congress Control Number: 2004107902

ISBN: 978-0-7645-7326-2

Manufactured in the United States of America

10 9 8 7 6

2B/TR/RR/QY/IN

About the Author

Andy Rathbone started geeking around with computers in 1985 when he bought a 26-pound portable CP/M Kaypro 2X. Like other budding nerds, he soon began playing with null-modem adapters, dialing up computer bulletin boards, and working part-time at Radio Shack.

When not playing computer games, he served as editor of the *Daily Aztec* newspaper at San Diego State University. Armed with a comparative literature degree, he began writing features for magazines and local newspapers.

He eventually combined his interests in words and computers, and sold articles to a local computer magazine. During the next few years, he started ghostwriting computer books for more-famous computer authors, as well as writing several hundred articles about computers for various techie publications.

In 1992, Andy and *DOS For Dummies* author/legend Dan Gookin teamed up to write *PCs For Dummies*. Andy subsequently wrote the award-winning *Windows For Dummies* series, *Upgrading & Fixing PCs For Dummies, TiVo For Dummies,* and many other *For Dummies* books.

Today, he has more than 15 million copies of his books in print, which have been translated into more than 30 languages.

Andy lives with his most-excellent wife, Tina, and their cat in Southern California. Feel free to drop by his Web site at www.andyrathbone.com.

Dedication

To my wife, parents, sister, and cat.

Author’s Acknowledgments

Special thanks to Dan Gookin, Matt Wagner, Tina Rathbone, Steve Hayes, Becky Huehls, and Kim Darosett. Thanks also to all the folks I never meet in editorial, sales, marketing, proofreading, layout, graphics, and manufacturing who work hard to bring you this book.

Publisher’s Acknowledgments

We’re proud of this book; please send us your comments through our online registration form located at www.dummies.com/register/.

Some of the people who helped bring this book to market include the following:

Acquisitions, Editorial, and Media Development

Project Editor: Rebecca Huehls

Senior Acquisitions Editor: Steve Hayes

Senior Copy Editor: Kim Darosett

Technical Editor: Lee Musick

Editorial Manager: Leah Cameron

Media Development Manager: Laura VanWinkle

Media Development Supervisor: Richard Graves

Editorial Assistant: Amanda Foxworth

Cartoons: Rich Tennant, www.the5thwave.com

Composition

Senior Project Coordinator: Nancee Reeves

Layout and Graphics: Lauren Goddard, Denny Hager, Joyce Haughey, Barry Offringa, Jacque Roth, Heather Ryan

Proofreaders: John Greenough, Brian H. Walls

Indexer: TECHBOOKS Production Services

Publishing and Editorial for Technology Dummies

Richard Swadley, Vice President and Executive Group Publisher

Andy Cummings, Vice President and Publisher

Mary Bednarek, Executive Acquisitions Director

Mary C. Corder, Editorial Director

Publishing for Consumer Dummies

Diane Graves Steele, Vice President and Publisher

Joyce Pepple, Acquisitions Director

Composition Services

Gerry Fahey, Vice President of Production Services

Debbie Stailey, Director of Composition Services

Contents

Title

Introduction

- About This Book
- How to Use This Book
- And What about You?
- How This Book Is Organized
- Icons Used in This Book
- Where to Go from Here

Part I : Windows XP Stuff Everybody Thinks You Already Know

Chapter 1: What Is Windows XP?

- What Is Windows and Why Are You Using It?
- Windows XP’s Luggage: Service Packs

Chapter 2: The Desktop, Start Menu, and Other Windows XP Mysteries

- Being Welcomed to the World of Windows XP
- The Desktop
- The Start Button’s Reason to Live
- Bellying Up to the Taskbar
- Logging Off from Windows

Chapter 3: Basic Windows Mechanics

- Dissecting a Typical Window
- Filling Out Bothersome Dialog Boxes
- Maneuvering Windows around the Desktop

Chapter 4: Flipping Through Files, Folders, Floppies, and CDs

- Browsing My Computer's File Cabinets
- Getting the Lowdown on Folders
- Peering into Your Drives and Folders
- Creating a New Folder
- Renaming a File or Folder
- Selecting Bunches of Files or Folders
- Getting Rid of a File or Folder
- Copying or Moving Files and Folders
- Seeing More Information about Files and Folders
- What's That Windows Explorer Thing?
- Writing to CDs and DVDs
- Floppy Disks and Memory Cards

Part II : Working with Programs and Files

Chapter 5: Playing with Programs and Documents

- Starting a Program
- Opening a Document
- Saving a Document
- Choosing Which Program Opens a File

Taking the Lazy Way with a Shortcut

The Absolutely Essential Guide to Cutting, Copying, and Pasting

Windows XP's Free Programs!

Chapter 6: I Can't Find It!

Finding Lost Windows on the Desktop

Finding Lost Files, Folders, Music, Photos, Videos, People, or Computers

Chapter 7: Printing, Faxing, and Scanning

Printing Your Masterwork

Sending and Receiving Faxes in Windows XP

Scanning a Photo, Letter, Receipt, or Clothing Stain

Part III : Getting Things Done on the Internet

Chapter 8: Cruising the Web

What Is the Internet?

What's an ISP and Why Do I Need One?

Setting Up Internet Explorer the First Time

How Do I Navigate the Web with Microsoft Internet Explorer?

The Web Page Says It Needs a Weird Plug-In Thing!

Saving Information from the Internet

It Doesn't Work!

The Pages Won't All Fit on My Screen!

Chapter 9: Sending Mail and Instant Messages

Using Outlook Express

Bugging Friends with Windows Messenger

Chapter 10: Safe Computing

- Assessing Your Safety in XP's Security Center
- Staying Safe on the Internet
- Maintaining Your Privacy in Windows XP

Part IV : Customizing and Upgrading Windows XP

Chapter 11: Customizing Windows XP with the Control Panel

- Finding the Right Switch in the Control Panel
- Changing Windows' Appearance and Themes
- Changing Network and Internet Connections
- Adding or Removing Programs
- Adjusting Windows XP's Sounds
- Performance and Maintenance
- Adding Printers and Other Hardware
- Fiddling with User Accounts
- Setting the Date, Time, Language, and Regional Options
- Accessibility Options
- Security Center
- Icons to Avoid

Chapter 12: Keeping Windows from Breaking

- Creating a Restore Point
- Tuning Up Windows XP with Built-In Maintenance Tools
- Fiddling with Drivers
- Cleaning Your Computer

Chapter 13: Sharing One Computer with Several People

- Understanding User Accounts
- Setting Up or Changing User Accounts
- Switching Quickly between Users
- Changing a User Account’s Picture
- Setting Up Passwords and Security

Chapter 14: Connecting Two or More Computers with a Network

- Understanding a Network’s Parts
- Setting Up a Small Network
- Setting Up a Wireless Connection
- Troubleshooting a Network
- Sharing and Accessing Your Computer’s Files and Folders
- Sharing a Printer on the Network

Part V : Music, Movies, Memories (And Photos, Too)

Chapter 15: Playing and Copying Music in Media Player

- Stocking Media Player’s Library
- Understanding Media Player’s Controls
- Playing CDs
- Playing DVDs
- Playing Videos and TV Shows

Playing Music Files (MP3s and WMAs)

Playing Internet Radio Stations

Creating, Saving, and Editing Playlists

Copying CDs to Your Hard Disk

Duplicating Music CDs

Copying Songs to Your Portable Player

Buying Music and Movies from Online Stores

Uh, My Media Player Looks Different!

Chapter 16: Fiddling with Photos and Movies

Using Your Computer as a Digital Shoebox

Creating, Editing, and Viewing Digital Movies

Part VI : Help!

Chapter 17: The Case of the Broken Window

My New Computer Keeps Getting Shut Down!

Restoring Calm with System Restore

My Mouse Doesn’t Work Right

My Double-Clicks Are Now Single Clicks!

Making and Using a Password Reset Disk

Making Older Programs Run under Windows XP

It Says I Need to Be an Administrator!

I’m Stuck in Menu Land

All My Desktop Icons Vanished

My Computer Is Frozen Up Solid

The Printer Isn’t Working Right

Chapter 18: Strange Messages: What You Did Does Not Compute

- Access Is Denied
- Allow This Page to Install ActiveX Controls
- AutoComplete
- Click Here to Activate Now
- Did You Notice the Information Bar?
- Do You Want to Run This File?
- Error Renaming File or Folder
- Found New Hardware
- Language Pack Installation
- Hiding Your Inactive Notification Icons
- If You Remove This File, You Will No Longer Be Able to Run This Program
- New Fax Received
- New Programs Installed
- New Updates Are Ready to Install
- The Publisher Could Not Be Verified
- There Are Unused Icons on Your Desktop
- To Help Protect Your Computer, Windows Firewall Has Blocked This Program . . .
- When You Send Information to the Internet . . .
- Windows Cannot Open This File
- You Have Files Waiting to Be Written to the CD

Chapter 19: Moving from an Old Computer to a New One

- Using the File and Settings Transfer Wizard

My New Computer Won’t Open My Old Computer’s Files!

Disposing of the Old Computer

Chapter 20: Help on the Windows XP Help System

Get Me Some Help, and Fast!

Consulting a Program’s Built-In Computer Guru

Using the Windows Help and Support Center

Part VII : The Part of Tens

Chapter 21: Ten Aggravating Things about Windows XP (And How to Fix Them)

Windows Makes Me Log On All the Time!

Turning Down (Or Up) the Volume

The Taskbar Keeps Disappearing!

My Bar Full of Buttons Just Fell Off!

Keeping Track of Open Windows

Lining Up Two Windows on the Screen

It Won’t Let Me Do Something Unless I’m an Administrator!

My Folders List the Wrong Task Panes!

What Version of Windows Do I Have?

My Print Screen Key Doesn’t Work

Chapter 22: Ten Things to Remember about Windows XP

When in Doubt, Right-Click

Create Restore Points

Make Windows Update Automatic

Show the Quick Launch Toolbar

Add Your Favorite Goodies to the Quick Launch Toolbar

Use the Show Desktop Icon

Use BCC When Forwarding E-Mails

Add Your Own User Account Picture

Share Files with Other User Accounts

Make Windows Open to the Size You Want

Lock Your PC before Leaving

Chapter 23: Ten Things to Look Forward to in the Next Version of Windows

Appendix A: Upgrading to Windows XP

Upgrading to Windows XP

Installing the Windows XP Upgrade

Introduction

W elcome to the second edition of *Windows XP For Dummies,* the world's best-selling book about Windows XP! I've expanded the book to explain all the recent patches, tweaks, fixes, and frustrations that Microsoft has added to Windows XP.

This book's popularity probably boils down to this simple fact: Some people want to be Windows whizzes. They love interacting with dialog boxes. Some randomly press keys in the hope of discovering hidden, undocumented features. A few memorize long strings of computer commands while washing their hair.

And you? Well, you're no dummy, that's for sure. But when it comes to Windows and computers, the fascination just isn't there. You want to get your work done, stop, and move on to something more important. You have no intention of changing, and there's nothing wrong with that.

That's where this book comes in handy. Instead of making you a whiz at Windows, it merely dishes out chunks of useful computing information when you need them. Instead of becoming a Windows XP expert, you'll know just enough to get by quickly, cleanly, and with a minimum of pain so that you can move on to the pleasant things in life.

About This Book

Don’t try to read this book in one sitting; there’s no need. Instead, treat this book like a dictionary or an encyclopedia. Turn to the page with the information you need and say, “Ah, so that’s what they’re talking about.” Then put down the book and move on.

Don’t bother trying to memorize all the Windows XP jargon, such as “Select the menu item from the drop-down list box.” Leave that stuff for the computer enthusiasts. In fact, if anything technical comes up in a chapter, a road sign warns you well in advance. Depending on your mood, you can either slow down to read it or speed on around it.

Instead of fancy computer jargon, this book covers subjects like these, all discussed in plain English:

- Keeping your computer safe and secure
- Finding, starting, and closing programs
- Locating the file you saved or downloaded yesterday
- Setting up a computer for the whole family to use
- Copying information to and from a CD
- Working with your digital camera’s photos
- Scanning and printing your work
- Fixing Windows XP when it’s misbehaving

There’s nothing to memorize and nothing to learn. Just turn to the right page, read the brief explanation, and get back to work. Unlike other books, this one enables you to bypass the technical hoopla and still get your work done.

How to Use This Book

Something in Windows XP will eventually leave you scratching your head. No other program brings so many buttons, bars, and babble to the screen. When something in Windows XP has you stumped, use this book as a reference. Look for the troublesome topic in this book’s table of contents or index. The table of contents lists chapter and section titles and page numbers. The index lists topics and page numbers. Page through the table of contents or index to the spot that deals with that particular bit of computer obscurity, read only what you have to, close the book, and apply what you’ve read.

If you’re feeling spunky and want to learn something, read a little further. You can find a few completely voluntary extra details or some cross-references to check out. There’s no pressure, though. You won’t be forced to learn anything that you don’t want to or that you simply don’t have time for.

If you have to type something into the computer, you’ll see easy-to-follow bold text like this:

Type **Media Player** in the Search box.

In the preceding example, you type the words *Media Player* and then press the keyboard's Enter key. Typing words into a computer can be confusing, so a description of what you're supposed to type usually follows.

Whenever I describe a message or information that you see on-screen or a cryptic Web address, I present it this way:

```
www.vw.com
```

This book doesn't wimp out by saying, "For further information, consult your manual." Windows XP doesn't even *come* with a manual. You won't find information about running specific Windows software packages, such as Microsoft Office. Windows XP is complicated enough on its own! Luckily, other *For Dummies* books mercifully explain most popular software packages.

Don't feel abandoned, though. This book covers Windows in plenty of detail for you to get the job done. Plus, if you have questions or comments about *Windows XP For Dummies,* feel free to drop me a line on my Web site at www.andyrathbone.com.

Finally, keep in mind that this book is a *reference.* It's not designed to teach you how to use Windows XP like an expert, heaven forbid. Instead, this book dishes out enough bite-sized chunks of information so that you don't *have* to learn Windows.

And What about You?

Chances are you already own Windows XP or are thinking about upgrading. You know what *you* want to do with your computer. The problem lies in making the *computer* do what you want it to do. You've gotten by one way or another, hopefully with the help of a computer guru — either a friend at the office, somebody down the street, or your fourth-grader.

But if your computer guru isn't around, this book can be a substitute during your times of need. (Keep a doughnut or Pokémon card nearby in case you need a quick bribe.)

How This Book Is Organized

The information in this book has been well sifted. This newly expanded book contains seven parts, and I divided each part into chapters relating to the part's theme. With an even finer knife, I divided each chapter into short sections to help you figure out a bit of Windows XP's weirdness. Sometimes, you may find what you're looking for in a small, boxed sidebar. Other times, you may need to cruise through an entire section or chapter. It's up to you and the particular task at hand.

Here are the categories (the envelope, please):

Part I: Windows XP Stuff Everybody Thinks You Already Know

This part dissects Windows XP’s backbone: Its annoying Welcome screen and user name buttons, the mammoth Start button menu that hides all your important stuff, and your computer’s desktop — the background where all your programs live. It explains how to move windows around, for instance, and click the right buttons at the right time. It explains the Windows XP stuff that everybody thinks that you already know.

Part II: Working with Programs and Files

Windows XP comes with bunches of free programs. Finding and starting the programs, however, often proves to be a chore. This part of the book shows how to prod programs into action. If an important file or program has vanished from the radar, you discover how to make Windows XP dredge your computer’s crowded cupboards and bring it back.

Also, by popular demand, a new chapter explains how to fax, scan, and print your important information.

Part III: Getting Things Done on the Internet

Turn here for a crash course in today's computing playground, the Internet. This part explains how to send e-mail and globetrot across Web sites. Best yet, an entire chapter explains how to do it all safely, without viruses and annoying pop-up ads. (And with the newly strengthened *firewall.*)

An entire section explains Internet Explorer's new security toolbar and how it stops Web parasites from attaching themselves to your board as you Web surf.