

Windows 7 - START MENU CUSTOMIZATIONS



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Windows7_StartMenu.lwp

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Where does all the stuff on the "Start" and "All Programs" Menus come from? When you click the Start button, Windows 7 merges the following 3 folders to create the "Start" and "All Programs" Menus that you see:

C:\ProgramData\Microsoft\Windows\Start Menu\

C:\ProgramData\Microsoft\Windows\Start Menu\Programs\

C:\Users\

"ALL PROGRAMS" AREA IS TOO SHORT: (You cannot see enough of the "All Programs" Icons)

- To make the Start Menu box taller which will make the "All Programs" area taller try these tips:
 - 1) If the Start Menu Icon size is set to "Small Icons", the entire area will be smaller. See below under ICON SIZE.
 - 2) Try increasing the number of Recent programs to display (*Right-click Start > Properties > Customize*), then under "Start Menu size, bump the count up for "Number of Recent programs to display" say from 10 to 20 and see if that is tall enough.
 - 3) Another trick is to right-click various Program Icons in "All Programs", then click "Pin to Start Menu" on each one. The Icons will appear in the upper Left each one you add will make the entire area taller for the "All Programs" box.

CLASSIC XP STYLE START MENU: See: <http://classicshell.sourceforge.net/>

ICON SIZE: The Start Menu Icons can be "Large" or "Small". To customize, (*Right-click the Start Icon > Properties > Start Menu tab > Customize*). Scroll down the list and check or uncheck "Large Icons".

FAVORITES AREA:

- The upper left hand section of the Start Menu is for Personal Favorites Icons.
- To add a Program shortcut to the favorites, simply right-click on any desired Program shortcut and click "Pin to Start Menu".
- Some Icons do not have a "Pin to Start Menu option" when you right-click the Icon. If so, try holding down the Shift key while you right-click on the Icon. "Pin to Start Menu" should now be visible.
- To remove an Icon, right-click the Icon and click "Unpin from Start Menu".
- To sort the Favorites: These menu items can only be sorted manually using drag & drop.

RECENT PROGRAMS AREA: The lower left hand section of the Start Menu contains Icons of recently used programs. To change the number of Icons displayed: (*Right-click Start > Properties > Start Menu tab > Customize > Number of recent programs to display*).

SORTING THE "ALL PROGRAMS" ICONS:

- The "All Programs" Icons are sorted automatically and continuously by default. The Program Icons group is listed first and the Folders Group second. The "Sort by name" option will not appear in the Context menu (Right-click menu).
- If you want to sort them on demand or manually position them, you have to turn off auto-sorting. (*Right-click on the Start Menu Icon > Properties > Start Menu tab > Customize*). Scroll down to the bottom of the option list and un-check "Sort all program menus by name".
- If there is no option to "Sort by name" when you right-click any one of the "ALL PROGRAMS" ICONS, this is normal. (See above). You must disable auto-sorting to see the option.
- To make the "All Programs" menu list the Folder Icons before the Program Icons (*like in XP*), you must turn off sorting and drag the icons around manually.

HIGHLIGHT NEWLY INSTALLED PROGRAMS: This is an annoyance that is on by default. To stop the highlighting of newly installed programs in the Start menu: (*Right-click the Start Icon > Properties > Start Menu tab > Customize*). Uncheck the box: " Highlight newly installed programs"

RUN BOX: To permanently display the Run Box in the Start Menu: (*Right-click Start Icon > Properties > Start Menu Tab > Customize*). Check the box: " Run command". Click OK, OK to exit.

TEXT IS TOO WIDE (ALL PROGRAMS BOX): If the "All Programs" text is too wide or too big, try these tips:

- 1) Put the Display into a higher screen resolution.
- 2) Then, make the DPI or Text larger as desired using the options in my "IMPROVE YOUR DISPLAY READABILITY" sheet for Windows 7.
- 3) NOTE: Visual properties seem to no longer affect this text in Windows 7, so I have removed my suggestions for changing the text size & font. Give it a try if you want.

CUSTOM FOLDERS FOR THE "ALL PROGRAMS" MENU: You can simplify and clean-up your "All Programs" menu by creating custom folders and then dragging closely related Program items into those folders.

- 1) Before starting this project, consider the following concepts & warnings.
 - a) The "All Programs" Menu is actually a compilation of Icons from two folders. An "All Users" Programs folder and your "Username" Programs folder located here:
`C:\ProgramData\Microsoft\Windows\Start Menu\Programs\
C:\Users\<username>\AppData\Roaming\Microsoft\Windows\Start Menu\Programs\`
 - b) When new Programs are installed on your PC, the installer usually put the program start Icons in the "All Users" Program folder so that they show up for all users, therefore all custom folders are best put in the "All Users" Program folder.
 - c) I do not recommend using the "Your Username" (Start Menu) Programs folder for custom folders, because dragging Icons from the "All Users" Program menu into personal folders creates unintended consequences.
 - d) Never try to drag items into a folder on the actual Start, "All Programs" menu. Use the folder view in the path shown in the next step.
- 2) To create a new custom folder for the Start, "All Programs" menu, first go to: (`C:\ProgramData\Microsoft\Windows\Start Menu\Programs\`). **WARNING:** Any changes to this folder will affect all users.
- 3) Click "New folder" to create your custom folder and name it. *For example, I usually create a folder called "UTILITY Programs". This is where I put all my General Purpose Program Start Icons.*
- 4) Now as a test, click the "Start" Icon and look in the "All Programs" menu. Your new folder should be there.
- 5) Go back to the new folder in the path of step "2", and drag any desired program Icons that are shown in that folder into your new folder. This will reduce the number of individual items shown on the "All Programs" menu.
- 6) **NOTE:** This new folder will appear on the "All Programs" Menu for each User on the PC.
- 7) **WARNING:** Moving or removing any "All Programs" menu entries will affect all users.

WINDOWS UPDATE ICON: How to Pin it to the Start Menu "Favorites area":

- Find the "Windows Update" Icon (*Start > All Programs*). Hold down the Shift key while you right-click on the Icon. Click on "Pin to Start Menu".