

Appendix A

Curt's Top 20 Windows XP Headaches



All right, now it is time to take a look at my top 20 Headache picks. These are the headaches that have annoyed me and plenty of other users, according to the newsgroups and Internet searches I've seen. You may or may not agree with my list, depending on what experience you have had; but one thing is for sure: you are bound to find some solutions here that will make your life with Windows XP a little easier. So, here are my picks, in chronological order!



20: My printer/scanner used to work fine, but now that I've upgraded to Windows XP, it does not work or does not work well.

Operating Systems Affected Windows XP Professional and Home Editions are affected.

Cause When you upgrade to a new operating system, the drivers that used to run your computer hardware are kept, and Windows XP tries to use them. The problem is that some drivers simply do not work with Windows XP—especially those written for Windows 98 or Windows Me. In this case, your printer, scanner, or other device may not work or may not work well once the upgrade is complete.

The Pain Killer The only solution is to locate a new driver that is compatible with Windows XP and install it. You can find an updated driver (if there is one) by visiting the printer or scanner manufacturer's Web site and downloading the driver. You can then install the driver on your computer. See Chapter 5 to learn more about device driver installation and management.



19: I want to use the New Technology File System (NTFS) because Windows XP is optimized for it, but my hard disk is a FAT32 drive.

Operating Systems Affected Windows XP Professional and Home Editions are affected.

Cause Windows XP works best with NTFS, but it is completely compatible with FAT32. If your drive is currently formatted with FAT32, you can convert it to NTFS without any problems. However, you should make certain you really need to. NTFS drives provide you with compression capabilities and security features, but depending on your use of Windows XP, you may not need any of these features.

See the Windows XP Help and Support Center for comparisons and more information about using NTFS and FAT32.

The Pain Killer If you decide you want to use NTFS, you can convert your FAT32 drive easily and without any loss of data by following these steps:

1. Log on with an administrator account.
2. Back up your data, just to be safe.
3. Click Start | Run. Type **command**, and then click OK.
4. At the command prompt, type **convert driveletter: /FS:NTFS**, where *driveletter* is the letter of the drive you want to convert. For example, if I wanted to convert my C drive, the command would be **convert C: /FS:NTFS**, as you can see in the following illustration:



```
C:\WINDOWS\System32\command.com
Microsoft(R) Windows DOS
(C)Copyright Microsoft Corp 1990-2001.
C:\DOCUMENTS\CURT>convert c: /FS:NTFS_
```

5. Press ENTER. The conversion process may take several minutes to complete.



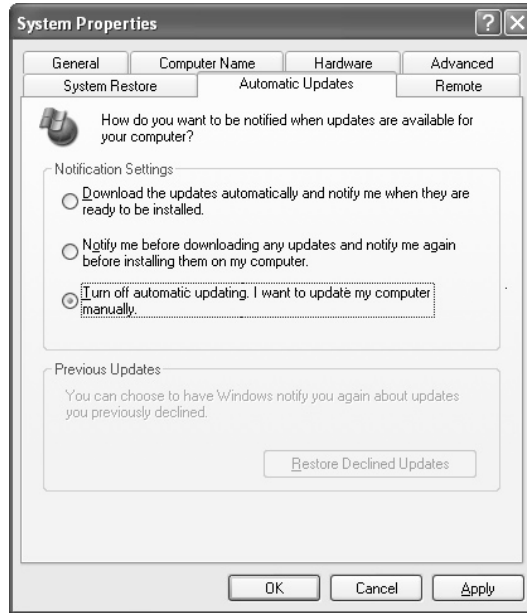
18: Windows Update keeps trying to connect to the Web and download stuff without my permission.

Operating Systems Affected Windows XP Professional and Home Editions are affected.

Cause Windows Update is a feature that allows Windows XP to check for operating system updates and automatically download them so you can install them. This feature works wonderfully, especially if you are on a broadband connection; but if you are not, it can be a real pain because it will try to dial your connection. You can disable this feature, however, if you don't want to use it.

The Pain Killer To turn off the Windows Update feature, follow these steps:

1. Log on with an administrator account.
2. Click Start | Control Panel. In Control Panel's Classic view, click System.
3. Click the Automatic Updates tab, as shown in the illustration to the right. Choose the Turn Off Automatic Updating option, and then click OK.



17: Windows XP keeps turning itself off when I leave it idle.

Operating Systems Affected Windows XP Professional and Home Editions are affected.

Cause If your computer hardware supports it, Windows XP provides a hibernation feature. After a period of inactivity, Windows XP can save all of the data held in random access memory (RAM) to the hard disk, and then shut itself down. Then, when you reboot, the data is read off the hard disk and back into RAM so that your computer is in the same state it was in when you left it. No data is lost on any open applications using hibernation. However, if the feature gets on your nerves, you don't have to use it.

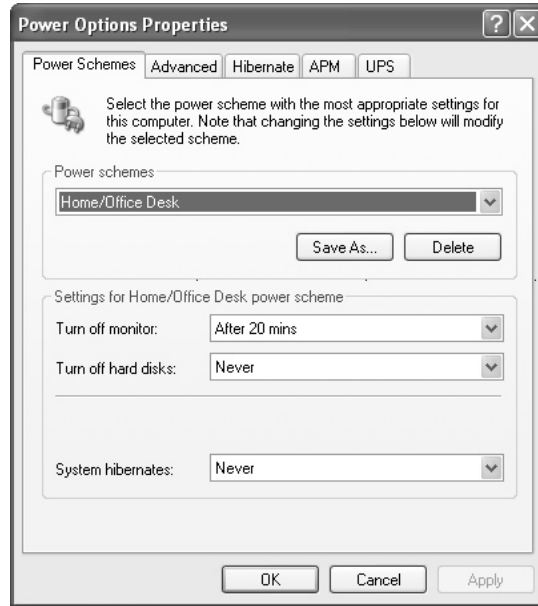
The Pain Killer To turn off hibernation, follow these steps:

1. Click Start | Control Panel. In Control Panel's Classic view, click Display.
2. Click the Screen Saver tab, and then click the Power button.

- On the Power Schemes tab, shown in the illustration to the right, change the System Hibernates option to Never. Click OK.

TIP

If you do not see the System Hibernates option, then your computer hardware does not support the feature.



16: I don't like the appearance of Windows XP, or I am having difficulty managing the Start menu.

Operating Systems Affected Windows XP Professional and Home Editions are affected.

Cause Windows XP provides a lot of new interface features that, theoretically, make using Windows XP easier. However, you may not like some of the settings or the behavior of the Windows XP interface. No problem, though, you can change it.

The Pain Killer To change the features of the Windows XP desktop, you can use two different options in Control Panel:

- To change display properties, click Start | Control Panel. In Control Panel's Classic view, click Display.
- To change taskbar and Start menu properties, click Start | Control Panel. In Control Panel's Classic view, click Taskbar and Start Menu.

For specific interface problems and solutions, see Chapter 1.



15: Folder views use large icons that require me to scroll around a lot.

Operating Systems Affected Windows XP Professional and Home Editions are affected.

Cause Windows XP provides new folder viewing options, such as Details, List, Icons, Tiles, and Thumbnails. You can easily switch to a view that works best for you.

The Pain Killer To change the folder view, open a folder, click the View menu, and choose a view option other than the one currently selected. On the View menu, you can also select the Arrange Icons By option for additional organizational options.

TIP

Click the Folder Options icon, in Control Panel's Classic view, to make additional changes to folder configuration.



14: I can't find the encryption or Remote Desktop features in Windows XP Home Edition.

Operating Systems Affected Windows XP Home Edition is affected.

Cause Windows XP Home Edition does not contain all of the features of Windows XP Professional. For example, it does not include encryption, Remote Desktop, or certain other features, such as NTFS permissions and Backup.

The Pain Killer There is no workaround for this problem except to upgrade to Windows XP Professional.



13: My network does not work.

Operating Systems Affected Windows XP Professional and Home Editions are affected.

Cause With Windows XP, you can set up a home network based on a number of networking technologies, including Ethernet, HomePNA, or even wireless. If you are having problems with your network, there can be many different reasons and solutions.

The Pain Killer To troubleshoot specific problems on your network, see Chapter 12.



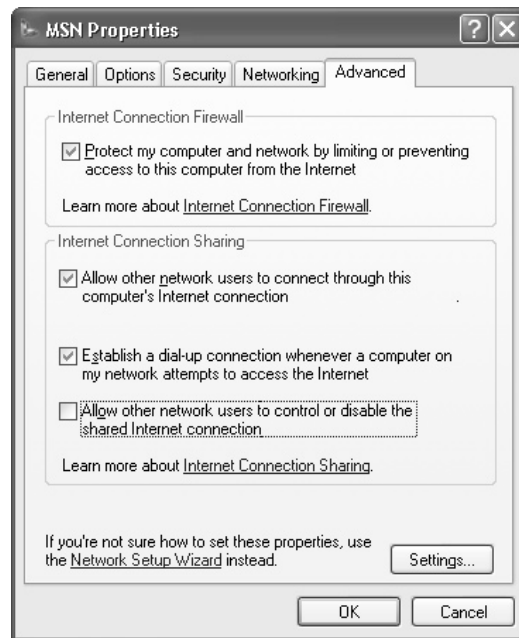
12: On my ICS network, network users can control the Internet connection.

Operating Systems Affected Windows XP Professional and Home Editions are affected.

Cause In Windows XP, your Internet Connection Sharing (ICS) clients can control the Internet connection, if allowed to do so from the ICS host. This feature is new in Windows XP and can be useful in a number of scenarios. When the option is turned on, users can connect, disconnect, and even reconfigure the connection. If you do not want users to be able to manage the Internet connection, however, you can disable this feature.

The Pain Killer To stop ICS clients from managing the Internet connection, follow these steps:

1. On the ICS host computer, click Start | Network Connections | Show All Connections.
2. Right-click the Internet connection, and then click Properties.
3. Click the Advanced tab, shown in the illustration to the right. Clear the Allow Other Network Users to Control or Disable the Shared Internet Connection check box, and then click OK.





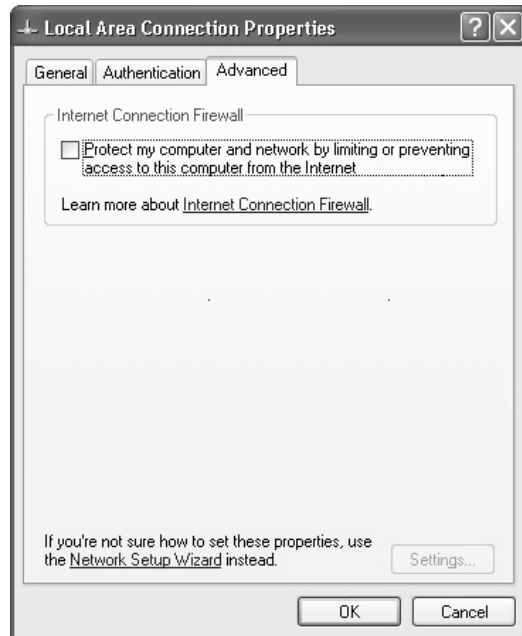
11: On my network, I can access all other computers, but none can access mine.

Operating Systems Affected Windows XP Professional and Home Editions are affected.

Cause The odds are good that the Internet Connection Firewall (ICF) is turned on for the network adapter. ICS protects your Internet connection by preventing all unsolicited network traffic. However, if you enable the firewall on the network adapter, client computers will not be able to access shares on your computer.

The Pain Killer To turn off ICS on the network adapter, follow these steps:

1. On the ICS host computer, click Start | Network Connections | Show All Connections.
2. Right-click the local area connection, and then click Properties.
3. Click the Advanced tab, as shown in the illustration to the right. Make sure that the ICF check box is not selected, and then click OK.



10: Internet Explorer will not let me view certain sites due to “security settings.”

Operating Systems Affected Windows XP Professional and Home Editions are affected.

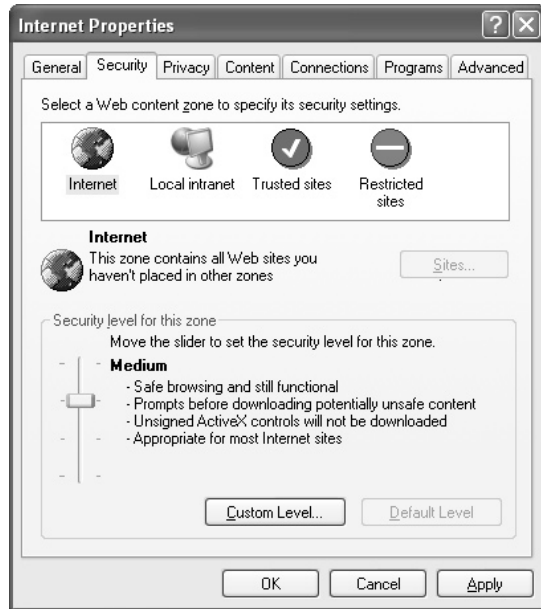
Cause Internet Explorer 6 has a number of beefed up security settings, including privacy settings that protect the use of cookies on the Internet. However, if the security settings are too tight, your surfing will be hindered.

The Pain Killer To adjust the security settings of Internet Explorer, follow these steps:

1. Click Start | Control Panel. In Control Panel's Classic view, click Internet Options.
2. On the Security tab, shown in the illustration to the right, select the Internet zone and adjust the security setting as desired using the slider bar.

TIP

See Chapter 10 to learn more about Internet Explorer options and settings.



9: My modem keeps hanging up when there is idle time.

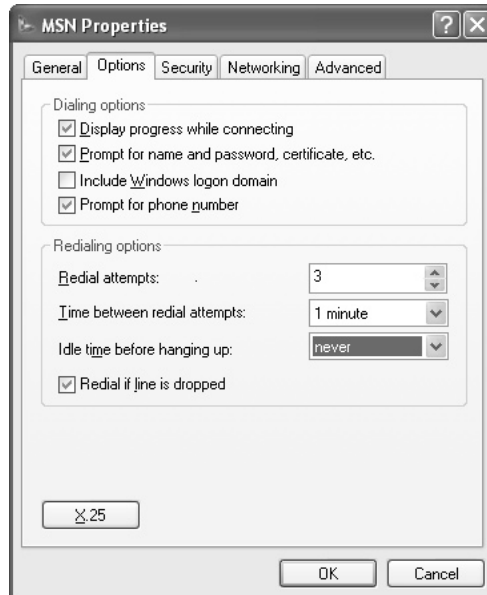
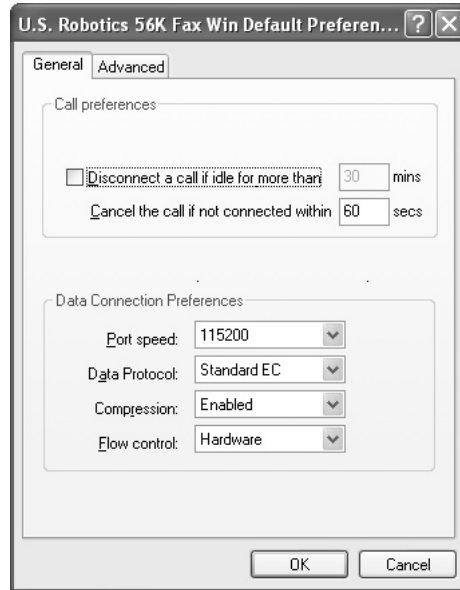
Operating Systems Affected Windows XP Professional and Home Editions are affected.

Cause Both modem and dial-up account configuration can hang up an Internet connection if a certain period of idle time goes by. However, you can stop this behavior.

The Pain Killer To stop the automatic disconnection feature, follow these steps:

1. Click Start | Control Panel. In Control Panel's Classic view, click Phone and Modem Options.
2. Click the Modems tab. Select your modem in the list, and then click Properties.

3. Click the Advanced tab, and then click the Change Default Preferences button.
4. On the General tab, shown in the illustration to the right, clear the Disconnect a Call If Idle for More Than check box, or change the value if desired. Click OK, and then click OK again.
5. To check the connection properties, click Start | Network Connections | Show All Connections.
6. Right-click the Internet connection, and then click properties.
7. In the Properties window, change the Idle Time Before Hanging Up to Never, as shown in the illustration to the right. Click OK.





8: The Internet is too slow.

Operating Systems Affected Windows XP Professional and Home Editions are affected.

Cause The speed of your Internet connection depends on a number of different factors, many of which are out of your control.

The Pain Killer Take note of these issues:

- The speed of your connection often depends on your Internet service provider (ISP). If you believe you should have better speeds than what you are getting, you can talk with your ISP's technical support staff; they may have some suggestions.
- Keep in mind that the Internet will be slower during peak usage times. Web servers are busy, and often this causes a lot of congestion. Late at night and early in the morning are always the best times to surf—even for broadband connections, which provide relatively fast connection speeds to begin with.
- If Internet Explorer seems to have slowed down over time, you can dump all of the temporary Internet files and cookies. This sometimes helps Explorer speed up its work. Click Start | Control Panel. In Control Panel's Classic view, click Internet Options. On the General tab, shown in the illustration to the right, click the Delete Files button under Temporary Internet Files.





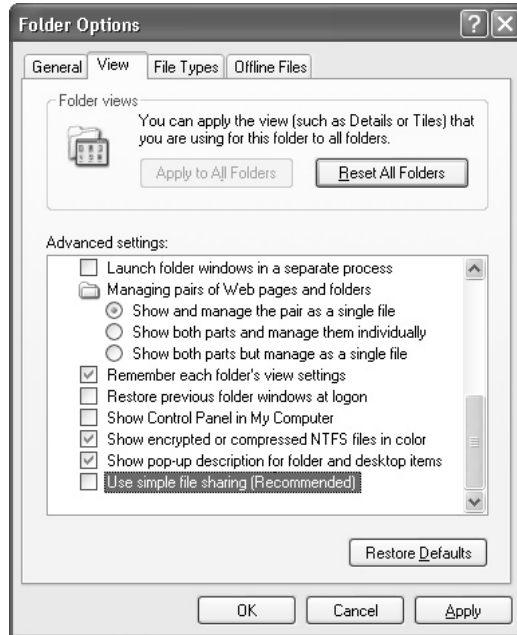
7: On a Windows XP Professional computer, I cannot configure individual NTFS permissions for a share.

Operating Systems Affected Windows XP Professional Edition is affected.

Cause Simple file sharing is used by default on Windows XP, but you can change the setting to enable configuration of NTFS permissions. Note that simple file sharing cannot be turned off in Windows XP Home Edition.

The Pain Killer To turn off simple file sharing in Windows XP Professional, follow these steps:

1. Click Start | Control Panel. In Control Panel's Classic view, click Folder Options.
2. Click the View tab, shown in the illustration to the right. Scroll to the bottom of the window and clear the User Simple File Sharing check box. Click OK.



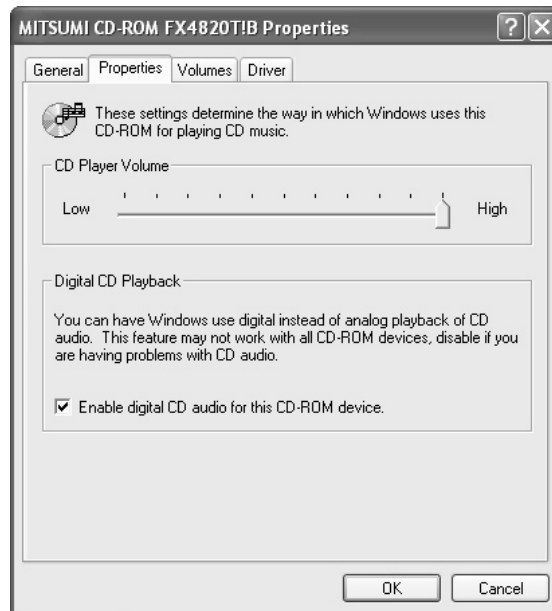
6: Windows Media Player will not play CD music and/or I cannot put CD music in the Media Library.

Operating Systems Affected Windows XP Professional and Home Editions are affected.

Cause If Media Player does not seem to play a CD-ROM drive, the drive probably needs to be configured to play CD music. If you are having problems putting CD music in the Media Library, keep in mind that you must first copy that CD music to your hard drive before you can place it in the Media Library.

The Pain Killer To configure the CD-ROM drive to play CD music, follow these steps:

1. First, check your CD-ROM drive to make sure it is set up to play music CDs. Click Start | My Computer.
2. In the My Computer window, right-click your CD-ROM drive, and then click Properties.
3. Click the AutoPlay tab. Under Actions, choose the Select an Action to Perform button and close Play Using Windows Media Player. Click OK.
4. Next, you want to make sure the device is configured to play CD music. Click Start | Control Panel. In Control Panel's Classic view, click System.
5. Click the Hardware tab, and then click the Device Manager button.
6. Expand the DVD/CD-ROM Drives category. Right-click the CD-ROM, and then click Properties.
7. Click the Properties tab, shown in the illustration to the right. Set the CD Player Volume slider to High. If the Enable Digital CD Audio for This CD-ROM Device check box is selected, leave it selected. If not, select it and click OK. Close Device Manager.
8. Now open Windows Media Player, and click Tools | Options.
9. Click the Devices tab, and make sure your Audio CD drive appears in this window. If it does not, try clicking the Refresh button.



10. If the CD-ROM drive still will not play CDs, go back to the Device Manager Properties window for your CD-ROM drive (see Steps 4, 5, and 6) and clear the Enable Digital CD Audio for This CD-ROM Device check box. Click OK.
11. If the CD-ROM drive still will not play music, make sure you have tried several CDs. When you are sure you have tried all of these steps, it's time to get some help from technical support. Consult your computer documentation for support information.



5: Certain applications do not work on Windows XP.

Operating Systems Affected Windows XP Professional and Home Editions are affected.

Cause All software, including applications and games, must be compatible with Windows XP in order to work.

The Pain Killer If you are having problems with older applications or problems getting games to work with Windows XP, you can try using the Program Compatibility Wizard to configure a compatibility mode. See Chapter 4 for more information. If this does not work, your only option is to upgrade the software to a version that supports Windows XP.

PREVENTION

You should never use antivirus programs or disk management programs that are not explicitly written for Windows XP. If you upgraded from a previous version of Windows, you should upgrade these programs as well. Check the program manufacturer's Web sites for details.



4: Windows XP performs tasks slowly.

Operating Systems Affected Windows XP Professional and Home Editions are affected.

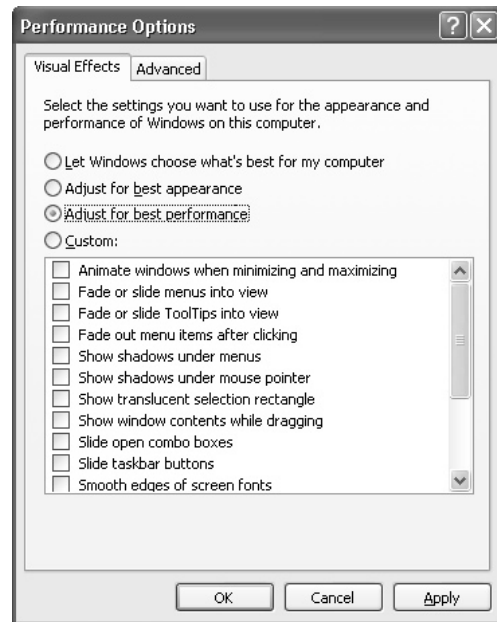
Cause Windows XP requires a processor and enough RAM to meet the needs of the operating system. If you upgraded from a previous version of Windows that barely supported Windows 98 or Windows Me, you are likely to have performance problems.

The Pain Killer In order to resolve the performance problems, consider upgrading the hardware or even purchasing a new computer. If this is not practical, you can optimize the Windows XP interface for performance. This will reduce the graphical appearance of Windows XP, but may give you a little more power. To adjust the setting, follow these steps:

1. Click Start | Control Panel. In Control Panel's Classic view, click System.
2. Click the Advanced tab, and then click the Settings button under Performance.
3. Choose the Adjust for Best Performance radio button, as shown in the illustration to the right, and then click OK.

TIP

The best solution, of course, is to have more RAM installed!



3: Windows XP will not boot, or a new configuration causes the system to crash.

Operating Systems Affected Windows XP Professional and Home Editions are affected.

Cause Windows XP crashes and boot failures are typically caused by problems within the operating system files or by hardware incompatibilities.

The Pain Killer You may need to get help from technical support to solve the problem, but you can also try using System Restore and Safe mode. See Chapter 17 for specific instructions on these features.



2: A hardware device will not work with Windows XP.

Operating Systems Affected Windows XP Professional and Home Editions are affected.

Cause Windows XP can automatically detect and install most Plug and Play devices. However, in some cases, a device may not be compatible with Windows XP or the driver may not work with Windows XP.

The Pain Killer To manually install the hardware, you can use the Add Hardware Wizard, and you can use Device Manager to configure and install the driver. You should check the manufacturer's Web site for updates and details specific to Windows XP. See Chapter 5 for more information about hardware Headaches.



1: Windows XP keeps giving me a permissions message instead of letting me perform certain actions.

Operating Systems Affected Windows XP Professional and Home Editions are affected.

Cause Windows XP does not have an open door policy, as did Windows 98 and Windows Me. You cannot make most significant changes unless you are logged on with an administrator account. A typical account allows only basic configuration changes and does not allow system-wide changes, hardware installations, or hardware removal. This feature prevents unauthorized users from making unwanted changes on the system.

The Pain Killer If you are getting the permissions error when you try to configure the system, you need to log off Windows XP and log on again with an administrator account.